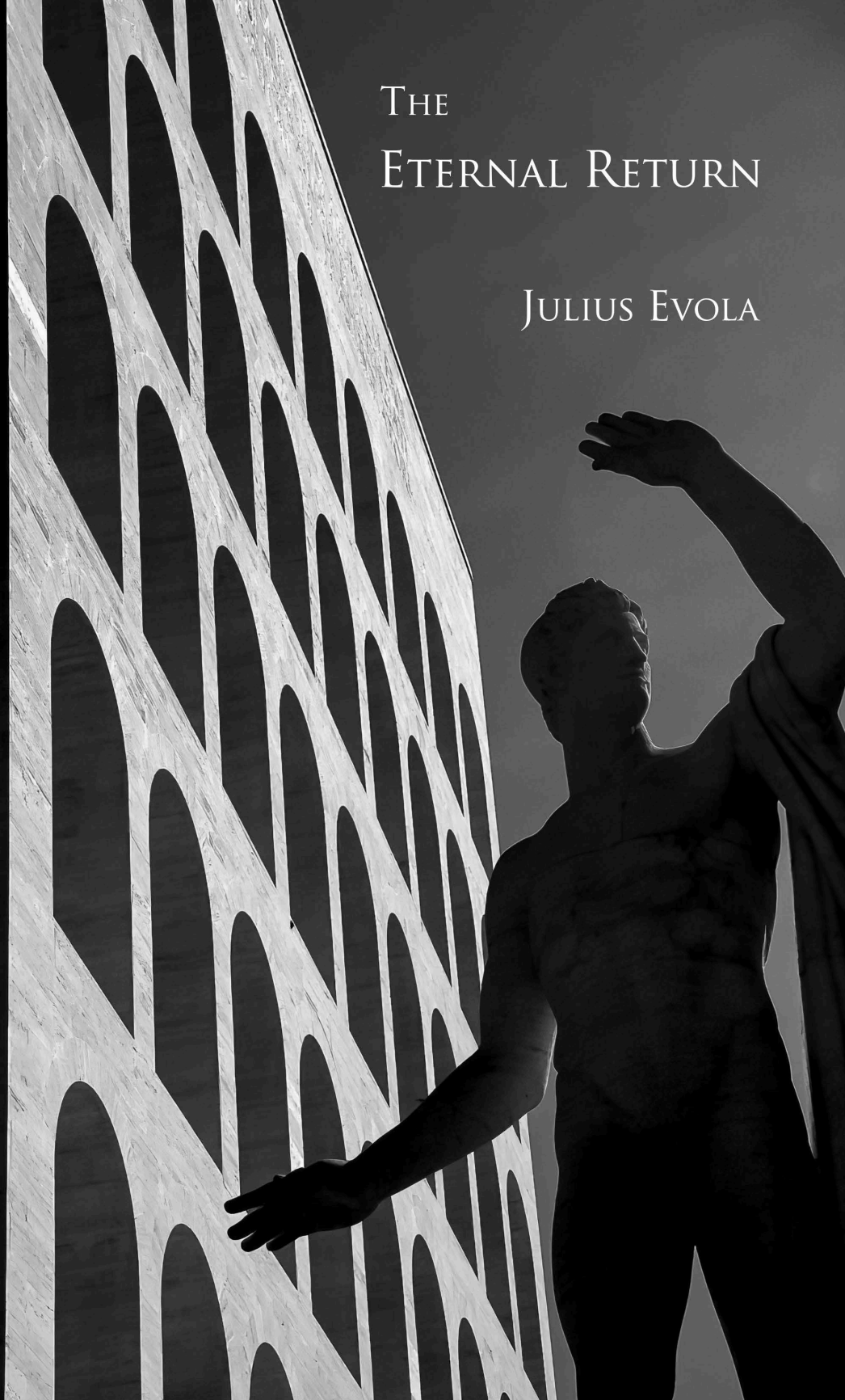


THE
ETERNAL RETURN

JULIUS EVOLA



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ESSAYS ON ANTIQUITY AND MODERNITY

JULIUS EVOLA



TRADITION

Contents

Part I: Modernity

The Fall of the State Idea	1
The Intellectual Preparation of Freemasonry and Revolutions	23
The Secret History of the Spanish Revolution	39
The Tragedy of the Iron Guard	49
On the Aryan-Roman Resolution of Fascist Italy	69
The Aryan Ethos: Loyalty to One's Own Nature	85

Part II: Antiquity

The Aryan Doctrine of Struggle and Victory	97
The Mystery of Race in Ancient Rome	129
On "Regnum" and the Spirituality of Caesar	141
Pagan Spirituality in the Heart of the Catholic Middle Ages	149
The Meaning and Function of Monarchy	179

PART I

MODERNITY

The Fall of the State Idea

In order to study not the external and consequential aspects, but rather the deep causes and full scope of the decline that the idea of the State has undergone in recent times, we must take as our point of reference a general view of history centered on the observation of a fundamental phenomenon: the phenomenon of caste regression. This is an interesting view because of its dual characteristic of being both current and traditional. It is current in that it seems to correspond to a more or less precise feeling that has been significantly foreshadowed today in different ways and almost simultaneously by writers from different countries. Pareto's doctrine of the "circulation of elites" already contains the seeds of this concept. And while we ourselves mentioned it in specific reference to the ancient caste system in one of our polemical books (*Pagan Imperialism*), it is set out in a more definitive and systematic form in France by René Guénon and in Germany, albeit with extremist exaggerations, by Berl. Finally, it is significant that a similar concept has provided the basis for a work animated by a frank "squadrist" spirit to denounce the "cowardice of the 20th century." But there is a second and more general title of current relevance to our subject, due to the new spiritual "climate" that has replaced the heavy positivist myths of yesterday in the field of cultural philosophy. As can easily be guessed, the notion of a regression of castes has premises that are clearly antithetical to those of the progressive and evolutionist ideologies that the rationalist-Jacobin mentality has introduced into science and historical methodology, elevating to absolute truth what, in the end, would only suit a parvenu: the truth that

the superior derives from the inferior, civilization from barbarism, man from beast, and so on, until it ends up in the myths of Marxist economics and the Soviet gospels of “technical messianism.”

Partly under the pressure of tragic experiences, which have dispelled the mirages of naive optimism, and partly due to an actual inner revolution, today, among the most conscious and revolutionary forces, such evolutionary superstitions, at least in their most one-sided and pretentious aspects, can be considered liquidated. This virtually opens up the possibility of recognizing a different, opposite conception of history, which is new but at the same time remote, “traditional,” and of which the doctrine of caste regression in its relationship to the fall of the idea of the state is certainly one of the fundamental expressions. It is indeed a fact that in place of the recent, materialistic, and “democratic” myth of evolution, the greatest civilizations of the past had unanimously recognized the right and truth of the opposite conception, which we can analogously call “aristocratic,” affirming instead the nobility of origins and noting, in the course of recent times, more an erosion, alteration and decline than any acquisition of truly superior values. But here, in order not to appear to be shifting from one one-sided view to another, it must also be noted that in the traditional conceptions to which we refer, the idea of involution almost always appears only as a moment in a broader “cyclical” conception, which, albeit amateurishly and in a much more limited and hypothetical context, has reappeared today in theories about the ascending auroral phases and the descending crepuscular phases of the “cycle” of various civilizations, such as those of Spengler, Frobenius, or Ligeti.

This observation is not without importance in relation to the very intention of the present writing. For we do not intend here to tendentiously emphasize views that might happen to suit “sinister prophets of the future”; rather, we intend to objectively clarify some aspects of political history that become apparent as soon as one takes a higher vantage point. And if, in doing so, we find negative phenomena in the society and political formations of recent times, we do not intend so much to recognize a destiny as to identify the features of what must first be realistically and courageously acknowledged in order to proceed to a possible, true reconstruction. Our study will therefore be divided into three parts. First, we will consider the “traditional” antecedents of the doctrine in question, consisting essentially of the “doctrine of the four ages.” We will then examine the scheme from which the idea of caste regression derives its specific meaning, in order to identify this idea historically and consider the progressive decline of the idea of the state in all its degrees and aspects. Finally, we will consider the elements that this conception offers us both for a general understanding of the most characteristic political and social phenomena of our time and for determining the paths that can lead to a better future for Europe and to the reconstruction of the idea of the state.

The traditional feeling of a process of decline taking place in recent times, a process for which the most characteristic term is the Eddic “*ragna-røkkr*” (darkening of the divine), far from remaining vague and intangible, gave rise to a systematically articulated doctrine, found almost everywhere with a very wide and strange margin of uniformity: the doctrine of the four ages. A process of gradual spiritual decline through four cycles or “generations” — this is how the meaning of history was

traditionally conceived. The best-known form of this doctrine is that of the Greco-Roman tradition. Hesiod speaks of four ages, symbolically marked by the four metals, gold, silver, bronze, and iron, during which humanity passed from a life “similar to that of the gods” to forms of society increasingly dominated by impiety, violence, and injustice. The Indo-Aryan tradition has the same doctrine in terms of four cycles, the last of which has the significant name of “dark age” — *kalī-yuga* — together with the image of the gradual disappearance, in each of them, of each of the four “feet” or supports of the Bull, symbolizing the *dharma*, that is, the traditional law of non-human origin, which in particular is that from which each being derives its rightful place in the social hierarchy defined by the castes. The Iranian conception is similar to the Indo-Aryan and Hellenic ones, and the same can be said for the Chaldean one. Although in a particular transposition, the same idea is echoed in the Jewish tradition, in the prophecies that speak of a shining statue, whose head is of gold, whose chest and arms are of silver, whose belly is of copper, and whose feet are of iron and clay: a statue which, in its parts thus divided (and this division has, as we shall see, a singular correspondence with that which, according to Vedic tradition, determines the four main castes in primordial man), represents four “kingdoms” that will succeed one another, starting with the “golden” one of the “king of kings receiving power, strength, and glory from the god of heaven”.

Not only is this motif reproduced in Egypt with certain variations that need not be examined and explained here, but even across the ocean, in the ancient imperial traditions of the Aztecs. The relationship between the doctrine of the four ages—which to a certain extent is projected into myth or into the

shadows of the most ancient prehistory—and the doctrine of the regression of castes and the relative decline of the idea of the state is established in two ways. First of all, because of the very conception that traditional man had of time and the development of events in time. For traditional man, time did not flow uniformly and indefinitely, but was fractured into heavens or periods, each of which had its own individuality and, together with the others, constituted the organic completeness of a whole. In this way, the chronological duration of a cycle could also be variable. Quantitatively unequal periods could be assimilated, once each of them reproduced all the typical moments of a cycle. On this basis, there was traditionally an analogical correspondence between large cycles and small cycles, which made it possible to consider the same rhythm, so to speak, in octaves of different widths. Thus, there are actual correspondences between the rhythm of “four” as a universal figure in the doctrine of the four ages and the rhythm of “four” as a figure in a more restricted, more concrete, and more historical context, in relation to the progressive descent of political authority from one of the four ancient castes to another. And the characteristic points that appear as myths in the first doctrine, albeit superhistorically, can therefore introduce us to the meaning of concrete historical upheavals that correspond analogically. The second justification for our linking the two doctrines lies in the fact that in the hierarchy of the four main castes, as traditionally conceived, we find fixed, so to speak, in immobile coexistence, as superimposed layers of the whole social structure, the values and forces which, through the dynamics of a historical becoming, albeit regressive, would gradually come to dominate in each of the four great periods.

We will limit ourselves to pointing out that with regard to the supreme caste, that corresponding to the lineages of the Divine Kings, and in the very concept of the function they embodied, wherever it manifested itself, there are recurring expressions, symbols, and figures that always and uniformly correspond to those that, in myth, are referred to the generations of the first cycle, the golden age. If we have already seen that in the Jewish tradition the first, golden age is directly related to the supreme concept of kingship—in classical traditions the legendary relationship between the god of that era and Janus is significant, since the latter, in one of his aspects, served as a symbol for a function that was simultaneously royal and pontifical—in the Indo-Aryan tradition, the golden age is that in which the royal function, fully awake, operates according to truth and justice, while the dark age is that in which it “sleeps”; in the Egyptian tradition, the first dynasty is the same one that has the attributes of the Osirified Sun Kings, lords of the two crowns, conceived as transcendent beings — and even in the traditions of Iranian Hellenism, rulers often took on the symbolic insignia of Apollo-Mithra, conceived as the Sun King of “those of the golden age”. On the other hand, it would be easy to show that in later times, in the dark age, or the age of iron, or the “wolf,” a predominance of those “infernal” forces is directly or indirectly depicted, forces that are promiscuous, linked to matter and labor as to a dark destiny — *ponos* — to which, in the traditional hierarchy, the lowest caste corresponded (the dark age — it is explicitly stated — is that marked by the advent to power of the caste of servants, that is, of the pure *demos*). Meanwhile, for an intermediate period, whether its reference is to the age of demigods as heroes (Greece), or to that in which the king is characterized only by energetic action (India), or in which titanic forces appear in revolt

(Edda, Bible), it refers more or less directly to the principle proper to the caste of “warriors.”

This is sufficient as far as the “traditional” framework of this view of history is concerned, which we will now consider in its essential features. As a premise, we are naturally obliged to clarify and justify what we have called the “traditional hierarchy” and the very notion of caste. The basic idea is that of a state not merely as an organism, but also as a spiritualized organism, such as to raise the individual gradually from a pre-personal, naturalistic life to a supernatural and super-personal life through a system of “participations” and subordination designed to constantly bring every class of beings and every form of activity back to a single central axis. It is therefore a political-social hierarchy with an essentially spiritual foundation, in which each caste or class corresponded to a specific typical form of activity and a well-defined function within the whole. This meaning took on particular prominence in the Indo-Aryan conception, according to which, beyond the four main castes, the upper castes, as opposed to the servile ones, were conceived as the “divine” element of “those who are reborn” — dvija — culminating in “those who are like the sun,” as opposed to the “demonic” element — asurya — of the dark beings — krshna. In this way, as a premise, one of the modern authors cited at the beginning, Berl, starts from a dynamic-antagonistic conception of the traditional hierarchy, almost a struggle between kosmos and chaos: the sacred aristocracy would incorporate the “divine” in its Olympian function of order, and the masses the “demonic” (not in the Christian moral sense, but in the sense of a purely naturalistic element): one would tend to drag the other along

with it, and each of the intermediate forms would correspond to a given mixture of the two opposing elements.

As for the reason for the fourfold division—four main castes—it proceeds from the analogy with the human organism itself. Thus, for example, in the Vedic tradition, the four castes correspond to four fundamental parts of the “body” of the primordial man—and everyone is familiar with the use of these analogies for the organic justification of the state, which occurred both in Greece (Plato) and in Rome. In reality, every higher organism presents four distinct but interdependent functions in hierarchical connection: at the lower limit are the undifferentiated pre-personal energies of pure vitality. However, these are already dominated by the system of vital exchanges and the general organic economy (the vegetative life system). This system, however, is superordinate to the will, as that which moves and directs the body as a whole in space and time. Finally, at the top, there is a power of freedom and intellect, the spirit as the supernatural principle of human personality. This is precisely the analogical reason for the four ancient Indo-Aryan castes, transposed into terms of social hierarchy: corresponding respectively to subpersonal vitality, organic economy, will, and spirituality, there were therefore four distinct castes: the servants (sudra), the wealthy, agricultural, commercial, and (in ancient times) industrial bourgeoisie (vaicya), the warrior aristocracy (kshatriya), and, finally, a purely spiritual aristocracy that provided the Divine Kings, or the virile priestly natures, the “solar initiates” who, conceived as “more than men”, appeared to everyone as those who irreproachably and more than anyone else had the legitimate right to command and the dignity of leaders: and of this last caste, the brahmins, in a certain sense (we will

explain later why only “in a certain sense”), were the representatives in ancient Aryan India. We call this fourfold division traditional, and not simply Hindu, because it can actually be found, in a more or less complete form, in various other civilizations: Egypt, Persia, Hellas (to a certain extent), Mexico, and even in our own Middle Ages, which likewise shows us the supranational social fourfold division into servants, bourgeoisie (Third Estate), nobility, and clergy. These are more or less complete applications, sometimes in terms of classes, sometimes in terms of actual castes, of the same principle, whose value is independent of its historical realizations and which, in any case, present us with an ideal scheme that enables us to understand the true meaning of historical-political development from the dawn of so-called historical times to the present day.

With regard to the overall meaning of the hierarchical system, it would be inaccurate and misleading, given the current meaning of the word, to describe it as “theocratic.” If we think of a state ruled by a priestly caste, or clergy, as it appears in the most recent forms of Western religion, this is not the case in the constitutions in question. At the top of the hierarchy, in truly original political forms, we find instead an inseparable synthesis of the two powers, namely the royal and the priestly, the temporal and the spiritual, in a single person, conceived almost as the incarnation of a transcendent force. The Rex was simultaneously Deus et Pontifex, and here, the latter word should be taken in the analogical transposition of its etymological meaning of “bridge builder” (Festo, St. Bernard): the King, as Pontifex, was the bridge builder between the natural and the supernatural, and it was eminently in him that the presence of the force from above capable of animating rituals and sacrifices was recognized, these being

conceived as transcendent objective actions capable of invisibly supporting the State and propitiating the “fortune” and “victory” of a lineage. If we move from ancient China and ancient Japan to ancient Egypt, to the early Hellenic-Achaean and then Roman forms of kingship, to the primordial Nordic tribes, to the Inca dynasties, and so on, we always see this concept reappearing; we do not find a priestly caste or church at the top; we see that “divine kingship” does not receive its dignity and authority from anything else (as when the rite of investiture takes over): it—as was said in ancient China and as will be repeated in the Ghibelline ideology of the Holy Roman Empire—has directly the “mandate of Heaven” and presents itself as a kind of “superhumanity” that is both virile and spiritual.

It is essential to establish this point clearly in order to identify where, ideally, the process of regression from the traditionally highest political ideal began. In this ideal, the hierarchy of the four classes or castes (here we cannot distinguish between the two notions, nor indicate the metaphysical premises with which endogamous closure was justified) thus sensitized the progressive degrees of an elevation of the personality in correspondence with interests and forms of activity increasingly free from the constraints of immediate and naturalistic living. For, compared to the anonymity of the masses intent on mere living, the organizers of work, the patriarchal owners of land, already represented the outline of a type, of a person. But in the heroic ethos of the warrior, a form of active overcoming of human constraints is already clear, the force of a “more than life” — later enthroned as calm domination in the head, *lex animata in terris*. The ideal of loyalty— *bhakti*, said the Indo-Aryans, *fides* said the Romans, *fides*, *Treue*, trust repeated in the Middle Ages—in the double

form of loyalty to one's own nature and loyalty to the higher caste, made the hierarchy solid and was the way for a dignified participation of the lower in the higher through service, dedication, obedience to an eminently spiritual principle of authority: for where the caste system—as in India—was most rigorous, there we see the highest castes imposing themselves not through violence or wealth, but precisely through the intimate dignity of the function that corresponded to their nature.

With this, we have all the elements to understand the course of recent times as a gradual descent of power, authority, and the idea of the state—as well as the predominant values and ideals—from one level to another corresponding to the four ancient castes. In fact, the era of the power of “divine kingship” has already receded so far into the shadows of prehistory that today it is extremely difficult, if not impossible, for most people to reconstruct its true meaning. Either we believe we are dealing with myths and superstitions, or we reduce ourselves to the aforementioned simplistic scholastic formula: “theocracy.” And even if someone still remembers what until yesterday remained as a remnant of such a primordial and sacred conception—that is, the doctrine of the divine right of kings—they are completely ignorant of its actual premises and do not know how to reintegrate it into the overall vision of life and the sacrum, from which it originally drew its power and its “legitimacy” in a higher and objective sense. It is natural that it would be presumptuous to attempt to specify historically the causes of the descent of the idea of the state from that supreme level, so far back does this phenomenon recede into the unstable terrain of prehistory.

However, in the realm of ideas, something can be said with sufficient probability through the concordant evidence provided

by the oral or written traditions of all peoples: we find evidence of frequent opposition between the representatives of the two powers, one spiritual and the other temporal, whatever the special forms assumed by each of these two powers in order to adapt to different circumstances. This phenomenon, which, moreover, cannot be original, marks the beginning of decline. We can say that the primordial synthesis, expressed by the notion of Divine Regality, was then replaced by the separation and then the antithesis of spiritual authority and temporal power and, to tell the truth, in terms of a spirituality that is no longer regal but priestly, and a regality that is no longer spiritual and sacred but simply and materially “political” and secular: the hierarchical tension loosens, the apex collapses, a fracture occurs, which will inevitably continue until it undermines the very foundations of the traditional whole. In this respect, the coming to power of a simply priestly caste expresses either a renunciation from above, or a usurpation from below, or both, and characterizes the first stage of a downward arc.

Needless to say, we are dealing here with a relatively recent phenomenon. The same primacy that the Brahmin priestly caste gained in India is probably to be considered as the effect of the increasing importance of the *purohita*, the priest originally in the service of the king conceived as “a great god in human form” when the original unity of the Aryan races underwent dispersion. In Egypt, until the 21st dynasty, the Sun King only exceptionally delegated a priest to perform the rites, and priestly authority always remained a reflection of royal authority—only later did the priestly dynasty of Thebes establish itself to the detriment of the royal dynasty. This was a revolution that also occurred in Iran, but it was suppressed with the expulsion of the priest Gaumata,

who had attempted to usurp the royal dignity. In Rome, according to tradition, the rex sacrorum was only established with the delegation of a power that, originally, until Numa, the king retained for himself, and which the sovereign took back for himself in the imperial period — and phenomena of this kind could certainly be found elsewhere. In any case, the statement by Gelasius I that “after Christ, no man can be at the same time king and priest” no man can be both king and priest,” and stigmatizing as diabolical temptation and creaturely pride the aspiration of kings to assume sacred dignity, can serve as a conclusion for the development of this phenomenon: in the same way that, recognizing behind the Ghibelline claims of the medieval emperors and the very character of the great crusading orders of knights an attempt now obvious, now hidden, but unfortunately now largely anachronistic and uncertain, to reconstitute the synthesis of the two powers, the royal and the sacred, the heroic and the ascetic—in the struggle between the Empire and the Church, we must consider the last episode of a story dating back to the very beginning of the process of decline now under examination. And it is indeed a process of decline that we are dealing with here, for this reason: that the separation of the two powers gave rise to the doubly destructive dualism of a spirituality that is becoming increasingly abstract, “ideal,” incorporeal, otherworldly in a negative and renouncing sense, on the one hand, and, on the other, a political reality that is becoming increasingly material, secularized, secular, agnostic, dominated by interests and forces that increasingly belong not only to the merely “human,” but ultimately to the subhuman, to the pre-personal element of the pure collective. Once the apex has collapsed, the first decisive phenomenon in this decline, with

which the center passes from the first to the second of the four castes, can be defined as the “revolt of the warriors.”

This phenomenon also has almost universal features and is expressed not only in history, real or legendary, but also in myth: almost all peoples, often in connection with the doctrine of the four ages (the correspondence is above all with the Bronze Age or the age of the “wolf or the axe” or of the “heroes” in the strict sense), bear the memory of more or less “Luciferian” revolts, of races of “giants”—the biblical “nephilim”—or of titans, or of non-gods—the Indo-Aryan “raksasa” and “asura”—who rise up against symbolic figures for a divine spirituality, often to affirm the principle of war and mere violence—that is, a distortion of the principle proper to the warrior caste—or to usurp a symbolic fire, which, however, turns into a reason for Promethean torment. And when it is not a question of usurpation (that is, in concrete terms: the attempt by purely temporal power to subordinate and reduce spiritual authority, even if it has become merely “priestly,” to *instrumentum regni*) — here we are in any case dealing with a revolt that is simply synonymous with abdication and mutilation. Guénon quite rightly points out that every caste, by revolting and claiming autonomy, degrades itself in a certain way in that it loses its participation in and recognition of a higher principle, losing its own character as it had it in the hierarchical whole and assuming that of the immediately inferior caste. In any case, at this point, to refer to the historical horizons closest to us, we are at the dawn of the era of the “warrior kings,” as is visible above all in Europe. No longer a virile spiritual aristocracy, but only a secularized military nobility stands at the head of states, right up to the last great European monarchies. It is defined above all by ethical qualities: a certain intimate nobility, a certain grandeur

and heroic superiority connected with the inheritance of selected blood, as well as physical prowess and natural prestige, which are the usual hallmarks of the most recent and already secularized type of aristocrat. And at this level, Guénon rightly points out that, for the state, rather than authority, it is now more appropriate to speak of power, a word that almost inevitably evokes the idea of strength or force, and above all of a material force, a power that manifests itself visibly on the outside and asserts itself by using external means, while spiritual authority, which is essentially internal, affirms itself only by itself, independently of any tangible support, and exercises itself, in a certain sense, invisibly: so that if one can still speak here of authority, it is only in terms of analogy.

Moving on now to consider the second collapse, whereby the center of power shifted from the warrior caste even further down to the merchant caste, if we refer to European history, it was heralded by the decline of the Holy Roman Empire, or rather, by the work begun by Philip the Fair. Spiritual authority, transformed into temporal power, is characterized by a materialistic and devastating hypertrophy of the principle of state centralization. The sovereign fears losing his prestige in the eyes of those who, after all, are now his equals, namely the various feudal princes, and in order to consolidate it, he does not hesitate to oppose the nobility itself, allying himself with the Third Estate and not hesitating to support its claims against the nobility: “And so we see the monarchy, in order to centralize itself and absorb the powers that belonged collectively to the entire nobility, enter into struggle with the latter and work towards the destruction of feudalism, from which it had nevertheless arisen: it could only do so by relying on the Third Estate, which corresponds to the *vaicya*

(the Hindu merchant caste), and that is why we also see, starting with Philip the Fair, the kings of France surrounding themselves almost constantly with the bourgeoisie, especially those who, like Louis XI and Louis XIV, pushed the work of “centralization” further, from which the bourgeoisie was to reap the benefits when it seized power in the revolution” (Guénon). At this point, the process of replacing the feudal system with the national system began. And it was in the 14th century that nationalities began to form through the aforementioned work of centralization. It is right to say that the formation of the “French nation,” in particular, was the work of the kings; they, therefore, unwittingly prepared their own downfall. And if France was the first European country in which the monarchy was overthrown, it was because it was in France that “nationalization” had its starting point. Moreover, it is hardly necessary to recall how fiercely “nationalist” and “centralizing” the French Revolution was, and also what a revolutionary and subversive use was made, throughout the 19th century and even in the First World War, of the so-called “principle of nationalities.” Therefore, if we already see in the establishment of the mercantile republics and free cities, in the revolt of the communes against imperial authority, and then in the peasant wars, the first signs of the subversive wave swelling from below, the centralizing absolutism of the warrior kings, in the process of establishing public powers as a materialistic replacement for the purely spiritual cement provided by the previous ideal of fides, with the abolition of all privileges and of the very notion of *jus singulare*, in which something of the ancient principle of castes was still preserved—such absolutism opened the way from above and met that wave from below, demagoguery: and public powers would be the organ in which, once the monarchy had been overthrown or reduced to an empty

symbol with constitutions and the famous formula of Thiers: “Le roi règne, mais il ne gouverne pas” (The king reigns, but he does not govern), the mere collective, the nation, would be embodied, initially in the form of the Third Estate.

Through the liberal revolution, by lowering the idea of the justification of the state to the mercantile and utilitarian one of a “social contract,” modern capitalism takes shape and, finally, the capitalist oligarchy, the plutocracy, ends up controlling and dominating political reality—that is, power descends to what in traditional terms corresponds to the level of the third caste, the ancient caste of merchants. With the advent of the bourgeoisie, the economy came to dominate across the board, and its supremacy was openly proclaimed over every remaining vestige of principles that were not spiritual, but simply ethical, still alive in the Western political world. This is the Paretian theory of “residues” and the Marxist theory of “superstructures”. By the force of a logic full of meaning, the royal title passes to the “kings of the dollar,” the “kings of coal,” the “kings of steel,” and so on. But as usurpation calls for usurpation, after the bourgeoisie it is now the servants who, in turn, aspire to domination. The pseudo-liberalism of the bourgeoisie was bound to lead to “socialism” under a mass regime and, this, to even lower elements, the pure “demonia” of the collective. Fomented by the internationalist, anti-traditionalist, enlightenment, and democratic destructions inevitably connected with the modern type of civilization and culture, with Marxism, the Third International, the Communist Manifesto, the proletarian revolt against the capitalist bourgeoisie, and finally with the Russian Revolution and the new Bolshevik collectivist ideal, we are witnessing the final collapse, the advent of the fourth caste: power passes into the hands of the faceless

masses, who turn to establish a new universal era of humanity under the crude symbols of the hammer and sickle. And here Berl exaggerates: for him, with the advent of the Fourth Estate, we are at the threshold of a subhuman world. The Fourth Estate is lifeless and its purpose is the lifelessness of life, of society, of human interiority itself: and such are, after American standardization and Taylorism, the ends pursued by the so-called “proletarian purification” from the residues of the bourgeois ego and by the so-called Soviet “technical messianism.” On the other hand, extracting the real content from the mythical form, upheavals of this kind were foreseen in more than one traditional teaching. If the Edda prophesies “bitter days” in which the beings of the earth — the Elementarwesen — will burst forth to overwhelm the divine forces and the “sons of Muspell” will break the Bifrost bridge that connects heaven and earth (remember the aforementioned symbolism of the pontifical function of sovereignty as a bridge builder), a similar theme is found, for example, in the legend that, from ancient times, reached the Middle Ages and became a kind of leitmotif: the legend of the “demonic” peoples of Gog and Magog who, breaking the symbolic iron wall with which an imperial figure had barred their way (symbol of traditional limits and of the ideal of the State as kosmos victorious over chaos), will burst forth to try to win the final battle and seize all the powers of the earth.

On the other hand, we have already mentioned that according to Indo-Aryan tradition, the kali-yuga, or dark age, would be characterized by the predominance of the servant caste and the emergence of a race of faithless barbarians, “intent on appreciating the earth only for the treasures it contains”(Vishnu-Purana). Removing the choreographic-apocalyptic element from

all this, it would be difficult not to recognize the correspondence of the new Soviet “civilization” of the faceless beast—faceless because it is composed of an innumerable multitude—in the process of rationally constructing the most modern instruments of mechanical power. If the contemporary Julien Benda prophesies as the epilogue to the phenomenon he describes, the *trahison des clercs*: “humanity, and no longer a certain fraction of it, will take itself as the object of religion. This will lead to a universal brotherhood which, far from abolishing the spirit of nation with its appetites and pride, will be its supreme form, the nation being called Man and the enemy God. And from that moment on, unified in an immense army and an immense workshop, knowing nothing but discipline and invention, denouncing all free and disinterested activity, and having no God but itself and its own desires, humanity will achieve great things, that is, a truly grandiose hold on the matter that surrounds it.” — if Benda writes this, we see here a kind of updated translation of the terms of the ancient traditional prophecy. In reality, if we have come to think that not only the idea of caste but also that of class is an outdated idea, and if we have come to believe that the family and personality themselves are bourgeois prejudices and, finally, that the traditional idea of nation no longer has a future, with a homogeneous, proletarianized international conglomerate as the highest ideal, whose only cement is work—it is easy to recognize that a social concept is gaining ground that no longer conforms to one caste or another, but rather to the outcast, the pariah: the pariah being considered precisely someone without personality or any culture: in short, the free man.

It is therefore the glorification of the pariah and his establishment as a universal model in the mirages of a purely

Ahrimanic power that seems to unlock the vaunted progress of the West, first auspicious of individualistic and Enlightenment disintegration, then of the barbaric ferment inherent in the Slavic soul in conjunction with the historical materialism of the Jew Karl Marx. Thus, it is clear that the general meaning of this process of caste regression and the fall of the idea of the state is the involutive transition of the spiritual personality to the pre-personal collective, symbolized, in a mystical form, by the totem of primitive societies. In reality, only by adhering to a free activity can man be free and himself. Thus, in the two symbols of pure action (heroism, the assumption of life as ritual) and pure knowledge (contemplation, asceticism) supported by a regime of just inequality (*suum cuique*), the two higher castes opened up ways for man to participate in that supermundane order, in which alone he can belong to himself and grasp the integral and universal meaning of personality. By destroying all interest in that order, by focusing on the passionate and naturalistic part of his being, on practical and utilitarian goals, on economic achievements and on all other objects originally belonging only to the lower castes, man instead abdicates, decentralizes himself, disintegrates, and reopens himself to those irrational and pre-personal forces of collective life to rise above which was the effort of every culture truly worthy of the name. Thus, once disintegration and individualistic revolt have taken place, in the social forms of recent times the collective acquires ever greater power, to the point of reawakening, in a new but even more fearsome form, because it is mechanized, rationalized, centralized, and translated into terms of social, economic, or state despotism, the totemism of primitive tribes.

The Jacobin conception of the nation, the “people,” society, or humanity now rise to a mystical personality and demand unconditional dedication and subordination from the individuals who are part of it, while in the name of “freedom”, hatred is demagogically fomented against those superior and dominant individuals, before whom alone the principle of the subordination and obedience of individuals was sacred and justified. And this tyranny of the group does not limit itself to asserting itself in what is “political” and “social” in the life of the individual: it arrogates to itself a moral and spiritual right, and demanding that culture and spirit cease to be disinterested forms of activity, paths to the elevation and dignification of the personality and therefore to the realization of the very presuppositions of every true and virile hierarchy, and become organs at the service of the collective temporal entity; ostracizing any “supernatural motive or any motive alien to the interests of the class” (Lenin) and discovering, in this way, “in every intellectual an enemy of Soviet power” (Zinoviev), it banishes the very morality of those who affirm that mind and will have value only when reduced to instruments in the service of the body. Moreover, the fourfold regression is not only political, social, and psychological in character, but also that of a given ethic into a lower one, of a given conception of life into a lower one. In fact, while in the “solar” era the ideal was pure spirituality and the ethics of active liberation from human transience, while in the era of the “warriors” the ideal was still heroism, victory, and lordship and the aristocratic ethics of honor, loyalty, and chivalry, in the era of the “merchants” the ideal is wealth (prosperity), pure economics, profit conceived—according to the puritanical deviation derived from Protestant heresy—as a sign of divine approval, the asceticism of capitalism, science as an instrument of technical-industrial exploitation conducive to

production and new profit or to the degrading rationalization of life—and finally, with the advent of the “servants” arises the ideal of “service” to the socialized collective entity and the universal proletarian ethic of “work” (“those who do not work do not eat”) with the degradation of all higher forms of activity into forms of “work” and “service”, that is, into what was once the “duty” and “way of life” of the lowest caste.

Similar considerations, observations of a fourfold rhythm of decline, could easily be made in relation to many other domains: family, art, war, property, etc. The doctrine of caste regression indeed manifests its fruitfulness in this: it enables us to grasp the overall meaning of various phenomena, which are usually considered separately, without suspicion of the intelligence to which they obey, and are confusedly opposed by most people without any sense of the true enemy lines or positions, only by referring to which is it possible to mount a true defense and a radical reconstructive reaction. Now, it is precisely this point that must attract our attention: the problem of reconstruction, the restoration of the true idea of the State. Guénon rightly points out that the more we sink into materiality, the more instability grows and changes occur more and more rapidly. Thus, the reign of the bourgeoisie can only be relatively short in comparison with that of the regime it succeeded, and if even inferior elements come to power in one way or another—in the various forms of the advent of the mere collective—it is to be expected that their reign will probably be the shortest of all and will mark the last phase of a certain historical cycle, since it is not possible to sink any lower.

The Intellectual Preparation of Freemasonry and Revolutions

"There are always thousands of naive people who believe that revolutions are spontaneous movements that can erupt on their own. But this is an impossible assumption in an era that strives to be an age of science, and which knows that the very processes that were previously believed to be automatic and governed by neutral natural laws—such as the decomposition of the corpse, disease, aging, and so-called natural death—are determined by concrete and living agents called toxins and bacilli. The same thing happens in society, which is humanity existing in space, history, and time. The bacilli and toxins that take shape in human beings—which are invisible to the eyes of generations and which historians ignore or (more often) imagine they ignore, but whose existence is no secret to the bacteriologist of society and history—cause the fevers, decompositions, and convulsions represented by revolutions. These words (found in Malynski and de Poncins' book *Occult War*) should serve as a fundamental methodological principle for all those who study the historical disciplines today and who wish to grasp the true meaning of the events that have unfolded in recent centuries. In fact, the history of revolutions has yet to be written, starting with the French Revolution—the "great revolution"—which even today is still largely influenced by the ideas of the circles that prepared it.

For those who wish to take stock of the background behind this fundamental event in the crisis of the Western world, we can recommend a truly valuable and thoroughly documented work

(now published by Einaudi): Bernard Fay's *Freemasonry and the Intellectual Revolution of the Eighteenth Century*.

This work not only presents a picture of this movement, which most people are unaware of, but also illustrates the methods of the Masonic sect. As for those who are more familiar with the science of subversion, they will find much material in Fay's book that will lead them further, and they will see things that the author, lacking the proper principles and due to his preference for the anecdotal and spectacular aspects of various events and personalities, did not notice.

To understand the role of Freemasonry in the French Revolution, we must extend the image of social "microbes" to establish that three factors are necessary for an organization to disintegrate or accelerate its disintegration. Certain parts of the organization need to have generally favorable conditions (predisposition); the forces capable of responding must remain untouched; and finally, the microbe must take active action to set the desired direction for the elements heading toward disintegration.

In the French Revolution, these three conditions were systematically implemented under the general direction of Freemasonry and its agents. It is now time to take stock of the French Revolution as a popular uprising, as a "noble demand for human rights" despite the "inevitable excesses," and so on, which are lies that can only be told to inexperienced and unsuspecting young people. Unfortunately, this is still often the case in our schools today.

In the French Revolution, as in almost every other revolution, the "people," the masses, played only a passive role. The real agents were a minority who used intellectual and ideological tools and who accepted and spread the subversive activities that prepared the revolution. This minority was by no means "the people"—on the contrary, it was the aristocracy, the nobility.

As for the various factors contributing to this "predisposition", these were the circumstances in which the nobility lived in France as a result of the systematic anti-aristocratic, anti-feudal and absolutist policies pursued by the kings of that country from Louis the Good to the so-called Sun King. Fay's research confirms what we have stated on several occasions in this regard¹. Namely, it was virtually absolutist centralism that prepared the way for the revolution by weakening the feudal nobility, which is the maintainer and backbone of any normal system. This nobility is the guarantor of the continuation of the hierarchical order even where the highest peak of this order, the monarchy, is in crisis. As a result of the aforementioned activities, the French nobility encountered nothing but inconveniences and humiliations; deprived of its power, it left the land of its ancestors and transformed itself into a court nobility, seeking compensation in vanity and substitutes for its lost prestige and influence.

This was the so-called "society" (*le monde*); power for its own sake on the periphery of the court, with increasingly international and snobbish traits, already evident in the 1700s. A new, intrinsically amorphous caste emerged, lacking the masculine and racial characteristics of the ancient castes. It was fundamentally open, as it respected values such as wealth and "brilliant" intelligence. The authentic ancient nobility did not value these

traits highly, and this made it immune to all forms of infiltration and promiscuity. It is only formally and sporadically traditionalist, conservative, and nationalistic; its true orientation, however, is liberal, as a reaction to the past. This became increasingly apparent with the death of Louis XIV, the last ruler who still wielded a strong fist. It was precisely this "glittering" and empty environment of the degenerate and decadent nobility that was chosen to prepare the ground for the revolution, long before the "people" had any thoughts of "rights" and "human demands." The people received these ideas from the nobility, which had been suitably manipulated by the Freemasons, with the task of transforming them from the abstract speculations of "enlightened and noble minds" into specifically revolutionary forces. This was made possible by the careful exploitation of the psychological and social preconditions created by absolutism, as mentioned above.

Fay deserves credit for highlighting the role played in this regard by the Anglicization of French "high society" in the early 1700s. The strongly Protestant English nobility appeared not as being held in check by the monarchy, but as holding the monarchy in check, and was therefore an enviable example and an enchanting model, a refuge for all liberal virtues. After the death of the Sun King, English "high society" set the tone for French "high society." It should be noted that this was the first deviation. Instead of transforming itself into a powerful, truly feudal and traditional nobility in the wake of the decline of central pressure and finding a way to regain its prestige, the French nobility went downhill: it followed a harmful – and fundamentally mythical – model. Fay also shows that the splendor of the English aristocracy was merely superficial, and

that even then, decay was already lurking behind the glittering facade.

But once this was the orientation of the French nobility, the ground was prepared. All that was needed was to sow the seed for the desired fruit to grow. And this is where the activity of microbes, or Freemasonry, comes in. Fay's considerations allow us to distinguish between different phases. First of all, there is the leaven (or virus) phase. This is the darkest of all the phases, because it is here that Freemasonry emerges as a potentially revolutionary sect. The second phase is the "intellectual revolution," the spread of the leaven in a "pattern" that captivated the European aristocracy. It was in this phase that the English aristocracy embraced Freemasonry and became Masonic. The third phase is the spread of the infection until the crisis, that is, the spread of Masonic ideas starting from England. This is particularly concentrated in France, where, so to speak, the "precipitation" takes place and the intellectual revolution culminates in a social revolution.

It should be noted, however, that the first attempt at this whole operation, which was intended to facilitate the next attempt, was successfully thwarted. There is not a single word about this in the history that is generally taught.

Fay's book provides detailed documentation that the American Revolution was essentially prepared by Freemasonry and then directly provoked by Freemasonry through a specific incident that led to a casus belli. The most important architects of the revolution, from Franklin to Washington, were Freemasons. It was at Masonic meetings that the ideas that served as the basis for the various events of the American revolutionary movement were

formulated. This includes the famous Declaration of Independence, just as an international Masonic congress held in Paris in 1917 formulated all the ideas and principles that inspired the League of Nations. As Fay recounts, at the grand parade held after the victory of the revolution, Washington appeared not with a sword at his side, but in an apron and Masonic sash, adorned with the sect's necklace and insignia, at the head of other prominent Freemasons. "It was the largest Masonic parade ever seen." And from that moment on, Franklin—the new Prometheus who, according to his motto, had stolen lightning from the sky and the scepter from the tyrants—was able to fool the French nobility into finally intervening militarily on the side of rebellious America. America repaid this favor by importing a new batch of revolutionary and "noble" liberal ideas into France, partly through Franklin himself.

But let us now look at the phase of preparing the leaven. We have said that this is a phase full of mysteries, because the process by which so-called "operative" Freemasonry was transformed into "speculative" Freemasonry is mysterious. This transformation, beginning in the 1700s, is the key and starting point of the entire subversive process, first intellectual, then social and political. In fact, it is a prejudice—one that we continue to fight against—that Freemasonry has always been a subversive political sect. The origins of Freemasonry are vague and distant, but it is certain that it only took on the characteristics of a revolutionary sect from the moment of the transformation mentioned above, i.e., in the first quarter of the 1700s and in connection with the "reform activities" of the Freemason Jean Théophile Desaguliers.

Before this period, a form of Freemasonry known as "operative" already existed in England. What Fay says about this

is somewhat superficial and limited to external appearances. It is clear that he is not really competent in this regard. According to him, operative Freemasonry was a continuation of the ancient guilds of architects (hence the name of the organization), which preserved the secret rites and symbols once associated with the practice of the craft. "The lodges were operative. They built temples, whitewashed walls, drew up plans, carved stones, and had rules for all of this. These rules appeared in their rituals not only as trade secrets, but were proclaimed, applied to the initiated, and presented to the profane as moral precepts. Since the Middle Ages, it has been customary to confuse mystical concepts, intellectual doctrines, and technical secrets." So says Fay. But things are a little different. Operative Freemasonry was in fact an initiation organization, and its "operativity" was essentially directed toward the inner self. Its "royal art" sought to transform what man usually feels to be himself and to raise it to higher, transcendent forms of consciousness. Like the expressions of alchemy, those of Freemasonry were purely symbolic.

By its very nature, this pre-Masonic Freemasonry was apolitical and hierarchical, with a tendency toward authoritarianism. For it would obviously have been impossible for those who sought to create a kind of superhuman or transcendent man to preach universal equality and the destruction of all order. Thus, Fay himself, when describing the constitution of these organizations, states that, contrary to what they later proclaimed, they prescribed loyalty to the rulers and the land, and even the suppression of all subversion and treason.

At that time, not a word was said about hostility towards the Church and dogma. Although these organizations had a Ghibelline orientation, it was free from the sectarian and social

character that gradually developed and ultimately led to a semi-theistic anticlericalism.

Now, in the first quarter of the 18th century, this Freemasonry was replaced by another, which became a hotbed of revolutionary and subversive activity. We repeat: the transition is mysterious. We can think of the probable involution of the previous organization, which, having lost its original spiritual principle, became an instrument of dark forces. These forces infiltrated the organization and, after transforming it in a suitable manner, used it for a new purpose. This hypothesis is credible not only because the symbols and "dignities" of operative Freemasonry live on in revolutionary Freemasonry, but also because, as we have already shown in a previous article,² all the basic ideas propagated by Freemasonry in its subversive activities can be regarded as originating from principles of a completely different nature, through falsification, profanation, and inversion. These are characteristic of all traditional organizations, such as early operative Freemasonry.

The new form of Freemasonry, which originally appeared in England, is usually referred to as "speculative"—not because it did not "operate" (on the contrary, it was precisely this that "operated" socially and politically), but because its focus was no longer on the spiritual development and transformation of an elite group, but on "speculation," that is, on the creation of an essentially rationalist, deist, and liberal ideology. This was to be the antithesis of all dogmas and all positive forms of authority, as well as the basis for the unity of people of good will, regardless of occupation, race, religion, or nationality. Instead of remaining a "qualitative" and initiatory organization, it wanted to become a church that would unite people of different creeds and countries

in its universality. The center of this "speculative" Freemasonry was the Grand Lodge of England.

However, the egalitarian and democratic features of this ideology did not come to the fore in the 18th century as they do today. Freemasonry recommended this ideology to the "chosen few"; it wanted to "enlighten minds" and presented itself as the great center that would dispel the darkness of the century and reject both the empty superstitions of the past and the blind obstinacy of atheists. In this capacity, it declared that this ideology could only be understood and followed by an elite, the "flower" of every nation's society.

And it was precisely in this way that Freemasonry seduced the nobility, first in England and then in France. In doing so, it achieved a twofold goal: on the one hand, it weakened the forces that could have organized effective resistance when the upheaval came; on the other hand, given the position of the class it wanted to seduce into becoming the mouthpiece of the ideas that would ultimately dig its own grave, it secured for itself the most effective means of influence. Fay documents this activity in detail. The speculative Freemasonry of the 1700s wanted to give the world a new aristocracy, essentially intellectual and moral, and proposed that the nobility should be its core. This created a close connection between the nobility and Freemasonry. The nobles who joined Freemasonry believed that they would acquire new titles and a new type of authority; the sect spared no effort to nurture this illusion and to flatter in every way the vanity of this decadent and unsuspecting class.

Fay seeks to attribute similar seductive and suggestive aims to the whole of Masonic ritualism and symbolism, as well as to the

use of mystery. A new atmosphere had to be created; it was necessary to appeal to the power of the imagination and the fascination of the occult. This is why the "high degrees" with the most suggestive names were created in England and then, above all, in France and Germany. These were unknown to the earlier "operative" Freemasonry. "They arose from the need to sublimate Freemasonry and to strip it of the craft aspect that necessarily annoyed the knights: those men for whom physical labor had been a stain for centuries, casting a shadow on their coat of arms forever." However, this explanation is one-sided. It is more likely that the high degrees and their corresponding symbols existed in some form earlier and were adopted from other initiation traditions, such as the Rosicrucians and the Knights Templar.

It is also possible that a much more subtle form of seduction was at work. That is, not one that appeals to the imagination with fantastical symbols and bizarre myths invented ad hoc, but one that, by evoking traditions with which the ancestors of the nobility often had intimate connections, captures and distorts the spiritual inclinations or vocations hidden in the family through falsification. For it was these that the sect wanted to put at its service. It is certain that there is a clear contradiction between the symbolic and ritual corpus of "speculative" Freemasonry on the one hand and its rationalist and leveling "religion" on the other. Fay's explanation in this regard is therefore superficial and inadequate. Between 1720 and 1750, Freemasonry succeeded, through various means, in bringing most of the upper strata of British society under its control and in gaining the support of the Hanoverian dynasty. And since this social stratum, as we have said, became the model for the "great world" of the 1700s throughout Europe, but especially in France, the work of further

infiltration was relatively easy. "Towards the middle of the 1700s, Europe was permeated by the atmosphere of Freemasonry. Everywhere there are Freemasons, everywhere there are secret meetings, everywhere there are mystical lodges and regular lodges, everywhere there are adventurers who offer the highest mysteries to the great, fiery titles to the nobles, and golden swords and trowels to the citizens. Everywhere they lavishly distribute enlightenment... England has reached the zenith of glory, its influence is felt everywhere. It is no longer princes who occupy the grand master's chair, but members of the royal family." As for the Latin countries and Germany, this infiltration of subversion took place against different backgrounds. Fay does not deal with these. The secret rulers were repeatedly exposed to the danger that Ramsay's activities would turn against them. Ramsay wanted to establish a traditional chivalric freemasonry that would appeal to the young nobility and function as a royal order under the aegis of the French kings and the Catholic Church. A similar case was that of the circles joined by Count Joseph de Maistre. He was a Freemason, but at the same time a Catholic and an unadulterated traditionalist, whose teachings were completely devoid of Freemason ideological subversion. This was also the case with some German Freemason groups. However, these opposing influences did not have a noticeable effect on the general nature of Masonic infiltration. Nor did it help that the Catholic Church, after repelling the attempt to infiltrate Freemasonry into its own ranks, condemned the sect; indeed, this proved favorable to those who wanted to unite all those who wanted to free themselves from the Church's rule and who fancied themselves to be free and "modern" spirits, enlightened and daring minds. This brings us to the final phase of the intellectual revolutionary activity concentrated in France. The disintegration of the old monarchist

and Catholic French civilization receives its final blow, and with the organization of encyclopedism, which flourishes in a genuinely Masonic atmosphere, the leaven enters an active and virulent stage. Ideologically, encyclopedism and, socially, the Masonic suicide of the nobility are the immediate precursors of the French Revolution. Let us give the floor to Fay. "The spectacle of the brilliant and feverish years that preceded the revolution is remarkable. Freemasonry laid its hands on the nobility and, through it, brought into vogue and enforced a philanthropic, egalitarian, anti-aristocratic propaganda. It promoted the Freemasonry suicide of the nobility. Historians who see the fatal consequences of the "abuses" of the old system in the revolution delight in pointing out the reasons that led the common people, the peasants, and the workers to rise up against the government of Louis XVI. They find economic and social factors to explain these phenomena. They are then satisfied with this. But they usually barely touch on the role of the nobility, without which the revolution could never have gotten off the ground.

During the first two years of the revolution, the revolutionary impulse, the revolutionary masses, and the revolutionary leaders became a privileged class. If the Duke of Orléans, Mirabeau, La Fayette, the Des Noailles family, the La Rochefoucaulds, the Bouillons, the Lameths, and the other liberal nobles had not abandoned the nobility to take up the cause of the Third Estate and the revolution, the revolutionaries would have lacked the support that enabled them to triumph from the outset. Now, all these nobles who embraced the new ideas from the outset—even though they later lost their inheritance, their social rank, and

their lives—were Freemasons, and we cannot consider this a coincidence unless we want to deny the obvious.

It is a pity that Fay, after documenting the preparatory activities of the Freemasons up to the eve of the French Revolution, does not go into further developments, on which he also expresses what we consider to be inaccurate views. He believes that with 1792 and 1793, the massacres and foreign wars, Freemasonry became rigid, fell asleep, retreated, transformed itself, and submitted to the revolutionary spirit it had supported: "the revolutionary spirit originated from 18th-century Freemasonry, the revolutions originated from the revolutionary spirit, and the new Freemasonry originated from the revolutions." This differed from the intellectual Freemasonry of the 1700s, which sought above all to influence people's minds and souls. How, then, can Fay write the following: "Freemasonry does not make revolutions, it only prepares and continues them. It allows its members to make revolutions, and even encourages them to do so at times, but during revolutions it disappears, only to reappear much more brilliantly and vividly afterwards"? How is it possible that Fay, who nevertheless saw this point clearly, fails to discover the continuity of Masonic activity—beyond its various forms—especially given the internal logic of the numerous phenomena that manifested themselves from the 1700s throughout the entire following century? The fact that Freemasonry is retreating and seems to be disappearing from history only means that it has found the tools that work for it—even if they are unaware of this and think they are serving completely different interests. Fay himself clearly sees that Freemasonry has developed the closest ties with the Anglican Church and with the English aristocracy, conservative, nationalist

and, let us say, purely imperialist forces. This would be a useful thread to follow in order to discover the true meaning and Masonic nature of many aspects of the activity that Great Britain has carried out in the modern world.

Nevertheless, at one point—which is worth reflecting on—Fay briefly mentions the following. "Freemasonry, which wanted to be neither a religion, a sect, nor a party, but named the union of men as its true goal, seems to be surviving the centuries that live under the spell of the idea of association and the bias toward the collective. In the 18th century, it prepared the way for the 19th century and predisposed people to the cult of "social reality". This is a social deity that takes no account of anyone and recognizes no higher order."

Finally, let us note that Fay's otherwise very interesting book has one shortcoming: it completely neglects an important issue, namely the relationship between Freemasonry and Judaism. Therefore, while he often mentions individuals and circles, he never examines the role played by the Jewish element in preparing the world for revolution since the 1700s. When pointing out this omission, we must also point out the incompleteness of the extreme thesis that attributes all subversive activities and the disintegration of European tradition solely to Judaism. Even in what we have mentioned here in connection with Fay's explanations, we find sufficient material to convince us of the one-sidedness of this thesis. If this anti-Semitic thesis were true, it would have to be proven, among other things, that the absolutist activities of the French kings, which created a corrupt nobility that easily fell prey to the Jews, were inspired by the Jews; and that the Jews were the authors of the fundamental shift that transformed "operative" freemasonry into "speculative"; and

finally, the ideological and preparatory precursors of the Freemason intellectual revolution: Protestantism and the Renaissance, with their enlightened thinking, would also have been Jewish phenomena. This assumption would also be bold. Fay's work, which highlights the fundamental role of all these factors in subversive activity, thus allows us to gain a more complete and deeper understanding of the subject. This picture can serve as a starting point for further research.

Notes

1. Arthos, Studi sui "Protocolli" ebraici: trasformazione del "Regnum," in: "La Vita Italiana," XXV, 296 (November 1937), pp. 535-544.
2. Julius Evola, From Esotericism to Masonic Subversion, Pannon Front, 27 (6th year, issue 3, June 2000), p. 42.

The Secret History of the Spanish Revolution

Quite a few books have been written about the Spanish Civil War. However, they have almost always limited themselves to examining the most recent events, without considering these events as the end point of a chain of causes and, to a large extent, as the consequences of preliminary actions that unfolded largely in the shadows and according to a very definite plan. The attempt to Bolshevize Spain was merely the final stage of a revolutionary movement that cannot be considered "spontaneous" at all. Incidentally, when ordinary people comment on the events in Spain, they are also surprised by the fact that it was Spain, a very Catholic country, that attempted to follow Moscow's path and implement the red revolution in its most extreme and repulsive forms. However, those who have a sense of the real goals of the secret revolutionary forces are not overly surprised by this, as they find it natural that the nations that have become the prime targets of subversion are those in which traces of the traditional order have remained to a greater extent—that is, the imperial, monarchical, and Catholic nations. In view of recent events, it was therefore Tsarist Russia that collapsed first, followed by the Catholic Habsburg Empire and then the secular dynasties of the Hohenzollerns and the ruling houses allied with them. Only states of secondary importance escaped, or monarchies such as England, which largely belong to the sphere of influence of anti-traditional forces because they gave space to the influence of the Masonic and Jewish international.

From this point of view, the attack on the Spanish monarchy and on Catholic and traditionalist Spain in general came as no

surprise, but we must also suspect that there were actions that originated from a predetermined plan. The revolutionary elements were not always conscious executors of this plan. Their success was often facilitated by a higher order of tactics and direction. Otherwise, we can say that the guiding forces we have referred to operated much more openly in the Spanish events than in other upheavals. The role played by Freemasonry and the Jews allied with communism is no secret. In a recent publication, Vicomte Léon de Poncins – well known for his works on the secret forces of the world revolution and his magazine *Contre-Révolution* – has attempted to reconstruct the secret history of the Spanish revolution by studying this particularly important aspect of the recent events in Spain. It is therefore interesting to publish here a short review of this very interesting book.

De Poncins naturally begins with the period of Primo de Rivera's dictatorship and the crisis of the monarchy. It was a fatal circumstance that de Rivera's dictatorship, while the fall of parliamentary democracy helped it to power, provided the best excuse for the intensification of revolutionary propaganda, which, while repeating the usual clichés of liberalism, even prompted intellectuals such as Marañón and Unamuno to attack the dictatorship and the monarchy. such as Marañón and Unamuno. They later realized what illusions they had fallen victim to, but by then it was too late. After de Rivera's death, the decree convening the Cortes was issued on February 7, 1931. The long-term plan for subversion was already evident at this point, as the decree, which was supposed to satisfy the demands of the discontented and thus calm the spirits, only served to double the agitation. The revolutionary conspiracy wanted at all costs to prevent the dictatorial regime from curbing the unrest and fought to prevent

a return to order and the convening of the monarchist Cortes. After Berenguer resigned on February 15, 1931, the agitation entered an acute phase, and the division and optimism of the right-wing elements in the face of the united front of the left-wing forces seemed truly tragic. April 12 arrives. The elections take place in complete silence, without anyone suspecting that the monarchy is living its last moments. The shocking results of the elections become known during the night: in Madrid, Barcelona, and many other large cities, the opponents of the monarchy have won. The government believes that the cause is lost and that there is no choice but to obey the "will of the people."

Here, de Poncins points to a profound misunderstanding and reveals the tactical maneuvering of those behind the coup. In fact, we must not forget that, first of all, these elections were purely local, and secondly, although the results in the above-mentioned cities were favorable to the republicans, rural Spain supported the monarchists by an overwhelming majority. In the end, 22,000 monarchists were elected against 5,000 republicans. Artificially spread slogans fueled the mood that turned these elections, which were by no means lost, into such a serious matter that the king had to abdicate. "How can we explain this unexpected collapse?" asks de Poncins. "If Spain is monarchist, what is the point of the revolution? Apart from the mistakes that were made, the situation was that an international attack had been launched by the secret forces of the revolution, primarily Freemasonry. The struggle had been going on for half a century. Working in the shadows, these forces slowly undermined the throne, and its defenders only understood where the blows came from after its fall." The most serious mistake of the Spanish dictatorship was that it did not

prepare or organize the fight against Freemasonry. Open struggle was not suitable for dealing any serious blow to the enemy. This mistake radically altered the international position of the dictatorship and created a formidable coalition that did not hesitate for a moment to take advantage of the favorable opportunity and carry out the aforementioned tactical action. By working to destroy Rivera, he was working to destroy the monarchy itself. In fact, the republican government formed on April 14, with the exception of Alcalá Zamora, who was of Jewish origin, and a few statists, consisted exclusively of Freemasons, and the event was greeted with triumphant cheers from the lodges. A Masonic newspaper wrote: "The new republic is a perfect reflection of our teachings and principles, carefully crafted by skilled hands. It would be impossible to achieve a more perfect Masonic political revolution than in Spain." Another valuable Masonic statement, also quoted by de Poncins, was written by the notorious Arturo Labriola:

"We saw that the monarchy was an obstacle to the historical path of the country, and we were able to overthrow it. But the monarchy is not the only obstacle... Now it is a matter of eradicating the Middle Ages, which has two very powerful pillars: the monarchy and the Vatican." We can already see the line that was to prevail after the Spanish upheaval. This line is not only that of revolution, but also of true and genuine anti-clericalism. Just as the blow fell on the monarchy after the dictatorship, so it turned against religious tradition after the monarchy. This explains the fierce hatred and unspeakable cruelty that gradually developed in Spain against the monks, even against members of contemplative orders who were completely alien to political intrigue. This phenomenon cannot be explained solely by the

usual social causes, but has much deeper and more mysterious roots. These are linked to a true and genuine counter-spirituality – one might even say "satanism" – that can never be separated from the forces that are turning the world upside down.

But Poncins writes: "The Spanish Revolution once again illustrates that a well-organized minority can take advantage of a period of turmoil and carry out a coup d'état. In fact, it was enough for the Freemasons in command to work out and carry out a coordinated action in the lodges to spark the revolution and impose a Masonic government on a Catholic and monarchist country whose population remained indifferent to political struggles. Once they had seized power, it was easy to present the movement as an expression of the will of the people, and it was sufficient to hold on to power for a certain period of time to effectively change the opinion of the masses in the desired direction. This is usually achieved by various means, the most important of which are the press and the schools. And we must recognize that Freemasonry is very skillful in this area."

True to its Masonic roots, the republic, believed to be conservative and Catholic, tore off its mask and revealed itself to be increasingly sectarian and socialist. It undertakes nothing constructive and does nothing to improve the living conditions of workers. After a period of strikes and unrest, on June 14, 1931, the republic enacted a new constitution that was clearly anti-religious and pro-Marxist. It resorted to the usual demo-liberal trick: on the one hand, it guaranteed individual rights, property, and other beautiful illusions; on the other hand, however, the October 21 law on the "defense of the republic" nullified all of this in practice. On this occasion, Azana said the following in the Cortes: "From today onwards, Spain is no longer a Catholic

country, even though millions of Catholics practice their religion." Taking advantage of the circumstances, they are trying to steer the subversive current in an anarchist and communist direction. The following programmatic statement comes from Communist leader Joachim Maurin: "Spain has begun its revolution. Every effective revolution has two stages: the democratic revolution and the socialist revolution. Without the first, the second is impossible." The socialist phase must, of course, later transition into the communist phase.

Among the interesting documents reproduced by de Poncins is the report of the famous extraordinary meeting of the Spanish Grand Orient on February 20, 1932. At that time, it was declared that strict Masonic discipline would apply to members who took on political functions, and Masonic guidelines were laid down in general for Madrid politics.

We cannot go into detail here about the various episodes of the intervening period. As revolutionary radicalism became increasingly apparent, the remaining right-wing elements had to commit themselves to some kind of response. The right-wing parties reorganized and demonstrated their strength in the new elections of 1933: 210 right-wing representatives were elected, compared to 161 radicals and 89 leftists. This was the moment when Spain could still have been saved. The key to the situation lay in the hands of Gil Robles. He was the leader of the majority and should have taken power directly, as he had been empowered to do by the elections. He was well aware that he would have to face civil war, as it was now obvious that Spain was facing the dilemma of communism and total renewal. Largo Caballero even announced on the radio: "We will take power by force." However, Gil Robles missed his chance. When he finally decided to act a

year later (by bringing two right-wing representatives into his government and taking direct control of the Ministry of Defense), the revolutionary forces had had enough time to gather, organize, and arm themselves. Gil Robles' gesture was seen as a "fascist provocation," and on October 5, 1934, Largo Caballo gave the order to revolt. This broke out in the main centers. The main hotbed was in Asturias, but due to a lack of real unity of action, the uprising was suppressed. However, the government did not take any serious measures against those responsible. Gil Robles was not on top of the situation here either. He became entangled in the web of democratic and constitutional legality and missed the opportunity to make another attack impossible. The next attack—the uprising—became possible without further ado. The secret organization behind the revolution was not even affected by the countermeasures, so the failed uprising can be considered a dress rehearsal for the final rebellion. In 1935, systematic preparations for this final rebellion were underway.

Even at this stage, it was becoming clear that Spanish Freemasonry, linked to international Freemasonry, was coordinating its actions with Communism.

This became apparent at the end of this period, before a single Italian or German legionnaire appeared in the ranks of the national counterrevolution. But Poncins documents the Russian—that is, Bolshevik—intervention in the Asturian uprising. This took the form of assistance with propaganda and organization, followed by the direct delivery of weapons and military supplies. At the Seventh Congress of the Communist International in Moscow, in his report on the events in Spain, the communist Pieck did not hesitate to attribute the glory of the Asturian military operations – "the battles of October 1934" – to the

Russian party. The secret forces of world revolution were now directly involving Spain in their games. We know what the tactical formula worked out by the congress was: the "popular front," a coalition of left-wing forces. (This also reveals the secret unity of these forces.) This coalition is formed in Spain and comes to power in 1936 after President Alcalá Zamora, seeing the impossibility of continuing to govern by parliamentary means, dissolves the Cortes and calls new general elections. But even at this point, final victory is still far off. In the elections, the Popular Front receives 4,365,000 votes, while the right and center receive 4,570,000. Only an anomaly in the electoral law, which favors industrial centers, allows the Popular Front to win 270 seats against 210. And so begins the period of red terror in Spain. As a result of communist and anarchist provocations, and with the authorities remaining completely indifferent, riots and acts of violence erupted throughout Spain. At the same time, the systematic organization of communist cells continued in various parts of the country. But Poncins shows how each of these cells was given detailed instructions for the day of the revolution. There was a plan drawn up by competent people. It specified which points were to be attacked, defended or destroyed. A list of people to be eliminated was drawn up. All this is part of the now more or less well-known chronicle of events in Spain. It is interesting to note, however, that all this activity can be documented precisely from February 1936 onwards, and that already during this period large quantities of Russian weapons began to flow into Spain, together with well-known communist agitators. Even more interesting is one of the conclusions of the Portuguese report sent to the Non-Intervention Committee. "In the part of Spain controlled by the Madrid government, all points of the program previously drawn up by the Comintern have been

implemented... All this was decided long ago and carried out methodically."

On April 15, 1936, Calvo Sotelo delivered his historic speech in the Cortes, which became his death sentence. He presented the real situation, exposed the Bolshevik threat, and demanded an end to the pretense—that is, decisive action by the government. He noted that if, as events showed, the country was moving irresponsibly toward a proletarian dictatorship, the national bloc knew the way to save Spain: the creation of a corporative and authoritarian state. On July 11, after Calvo Sotelo's overwhelming indictment, the infamous "La Passionaria" (Dolores Ibarruri) exclaimed: "This man has spoken for the last time." That is exactly what happened. It appears that the order to assassinate Calvo Sotelo was transmitted from Geneva by a Freemason, Augusto Barcia.

The rest is history. On July 18, the Moroccan army revolted, Franco's national movement began, and the war for the liberation of Spain was launched. This war is now coming to an end, and as the first battle of a war, it marks the defeat of the forces of world revolution. "Spain is a world at a crossroads," wrote the central Bolshevik newspaper *L'Orrizzonte* in its July 22, 1937, issue No. 31. In the conclusion to his book, de Poncins writes: "It is no exaggeration to say that the war in Spain is a consequence of Soviet influence. Russia methodically prepared the revolution, the first violent manifestations of which provoked a nationalist reaction. Moscow made no secret of what was going on. One of the museums in the capital of the Soviet Union has long had a room dedicated to the coming Spanish revolution. The Spanish Civil War is an international war initiated by Russia, and the mutual mudslinging is childish."

But through Bolshevism, the thread of these tragic events leads even further. The secret forces of world revolution worked in concert to destroy the remnants of old Spain, and the experienced eye can easily recognize the signs of their favorite tactics in these events. We shall see what path the new Spain will take once it has overcome this very difficult period of trial. There are also more subtle trials—beyond those of a material, moral, and narrower sense—namely, trials of ideas. Indeed, it is here that the decisive clash between the forces of revolution and counterrevolution will take place.

The Tragedy of the Iron Guard

Bucharest, March 1938. Our car takes us out of the suburbs along a dreary provincial road under a gray and rainy sky. We turn sharply to the left onto a country road and stop in front of a building with clean lines: this is the “Green House,” the headquarters of the Iron Guard. “We built it with our own hands!” says the legionnaire leader accompanying us, with a certain pride. We enter and, after passing through a kind of guardhouse, we go up to the first floor. A group of legionnaires stepped aside and a tall, slender young man advanced toward us, his face bearing an unusual expression of nobility, frankness, and energy: with gray-blue eyes and a high forehead, he was the very archetype of an Aryan Roman. Mixed with his virile features, however, there was something contemplative and mystical about his expression. Before us stood Corneliu Codreanu, leader and founder of the Romanian Iron Guard—the man who has been called an “assassin,” “Hitler's henchman,” and “anarchist conspirator” in the world's press because, since 1919, he has thrown down the gauntlet to Israel and to the forces that, in one way or another, act as its objective allies in Romanian national life.

Among the many leaders of national movements we have had the opportunity to meet in Europe, few — if any — have made such a favorable impression on us as Codreanu. He was one of the few with whom we were able to speak with such (almost total) communion of ideas; one of the few in whom we found the ability to rise so clearly above the level of contingencies and bring back to genuinely spiritual premises a desire for political and

national renewal. And Codreanu himself did not hide his satisfaction at finally meeting someone with whom he could go beyond the stereotypical formula of “constructive nationalism” — a formula which, incidentally, was quite incapable of expressing the profound essence of the Romanian legionary movement.

We were then living through the fall of the Goga cabinet, the direct intervention of the king, the promulgation of the new constitution, and the plebiscite. We were aware of all the ins and outs of these upheavals, but Codreanu completed our view of the situation by providing a brilliant summary. He was full of faith in the future and in the imminent victory of his movement. If he did not react or express any opposition, it was for very specific tactical reasons: “If there had been regular elections, as Goga believed, we would have won by a landslide,” Codreanu told us. “However, faced with the choice of saying yes or no to a fait accompli, that is, the constitution, which was inspired by the Sovereign, we refused to fight.” And he even added: “We took the first line of trenches, then the second, then the third, and the enemy, sheltered in the redoubt where he has entrenched himself, is now firing at us without even knowing that what we want is to come to his aid against his real enemy.” And we also remember another remark Codreanu made in response to a question we asked him about his attitude toward the King: “But we are all monarchists! However, we cannot renounce our mission and agree to compromise ourselves with a moribund and corrupt world.”

And when he insisted on driving us back to our hotel in his own car—without worrying about how unusual this might be (and we were even less concerned about the warning we had received from our legation that anyone who met Codreanu would

be expelled from the country within 24 hours)— — and when he took his leave, knowing that we were continuing our journey via Berlin and Rome, he said to us: “Tell all those who are fighting for the same cause as us that I salute them and that Romanian legionnaires are and will remain unconditionally at their side in the anti-Semitic, anti-democratic, and anti-Bolshevik struggle.”

The Italian translation of Codreanu's book, entitled *La Garde de Fer*, has just been published in the *Europa Giovane* collection (Casa Editrice Nazionale, Rome-Turin, 1938), as we had already been informed in Bucharest. This is the first part of a work that is both the Captain's autobiography and the history of his movement's struggle, and which naturally also contains an exposition of his doctrine and political program. This book can be compared to the first part of A. Hitler's *Mein Kampf*, without the slightest fear that he will emerge diminished from such a confrontation. In fact, it is the very force—and the very tragedy—of the situation that makes the story so compelling. Hitler's *Mein Kampf* without fear that it would emerge diminished from such a comparison. In fact, it is the very force—and tragedy—of events that gives Codreanu's account such evocative power. And we believe that every fascist, in the broadest sense, owes it to himself to learn from it the tragic and painful vicissitudes of a struggle which, on Romanian soil, merely repeated the one we ourselves faced during our anti-democratic and anti-Semitic revolutions. And now is the time when, in this area, we finally know the truth that is obscured or distorted by a biased press: we cannot form an accurate picture of Romania's possible future developments if we neglect the factor represented by the Legionary movement—repressed today but certainly not out of action.

By its very nature, Codreanu's book cannot be easily summarized. We can only provide a few general and doctrinal indications here to help understand the nature of Codreanu's movement. Barely twenty years old, Codreanu launched himself in the years 1919-1920, not only through words but also through squadrist action, in the fight against the communist threat in the name of the Romanian nation, striking out against rebellious workers, tearing down the red flags they had hoisted on their factories and replacing them with the national flag. A disciple of A.C. Cuza, dean of Romanian nationalism and precursor of the anti-Semitic struggle, Codreanu had already seen, at the time, what the victory of communism would really mean: not a Romania headed by a Romanian proletarian regime, but its enslavement, from the very next day, under the most ignoble of tyrannies (...). From that moment on, Codreanu became the *bête noire* of the Israeli-funded press, the target of a fierce campaign of defamation and hatred which, through him, also aimed at the national faith of an entire people. Here is what Codreanu wrote on this subject: "In a single year, I learned so much about anti-Semitism that it could fill the lives of three men. Because I cannot see the most sacred beliefs of a people—that is, what their hearts love and respect—being profaned without suffering deeply and without the wound inflicted on them bleeding profusely. That was seventeen years ago, and the wound still bleeds." At the time, Codreanu was fighting against those who sang hymns to the red international, and his supporters were smashing up the printing presses of Semitic newspapers that insulted the King, the Army, and the Church. But a little later, this time in the name of the King, the Army, and Order, a Romanian press skilled at changing sides continued the same campaign against Codreanu, spreading hatred and slander about his movement throughout its columns.

“I cannot define,” wrote Codreanu, “how I entered the fray. Perhaps like a man walking down the street with his own concerns, thoughts, and worries, who suddenly sees a house engulfed in flames and throws off his jacket to rush to the aid of those who are prey to the flames. With the simple common sense of a twenty-year-old boy, that was all that inspired me when I saw the spectacle around me: we were losing our homeland, and with the unwitting help of the unfortunate Romanian workers who had been robbed and reduced to poverty, the dictatorial and exterminatory order of Israel would now reign. It was out of a heartfelt impulse that I began, driven by the instinct for self-preservation that even the lowliest worm possesses—with the difference that this was not an instinct for individual survival, but for the defense of the race to which I belonged. That is why I always felt that the entire weight of our race rested on our shoulders, with the living but also with the procession of those who died for it and those yet to be born; the feeling that the race struggles and expresses itself through us and that, no matter how many enemies we have, in the face of such a historical entity, they are only a handful of insignificant individuals whom we will scatter and defeat... The individual within the framework and in the service of his race, the race within the framework and in the service of God and the laws of the Divinity: whoever understands this will triumph, even if he is alone. And whoever does not understand this will bite the dust.”

Such was Codreanu's profession of faith in 1922, when he was completing his university studies. As president of the nationalist law students' association, he simultaneously laid down the broad outlines of the anti-Semitic campaign in the following terms: “a) to identify the spirit and mentality foreign to our

people that have insidiously infiltrated the ways of feeling and thinking of a large number of our compatriots; b) carry out our own detoxification, eliminate Judaism introduced into our own thinking through school books, teachers, theater, and cinema; c) become aware of Jewish activities and expose them, whatever guise they may take. For we have political parties that are, admittedly, led by Romanians, but it is Judaism that speaks through them. We have Romanian newspapers, written by Romanians, but they are nothing more than a platform for the Jew and his interests—just as we have Romanian lecturers, but they think, write, and speak Hebrew with Romanian words.” At the same time, practical problems were also raised in political, national, and social terms: that of vast regions of Romania literally colonized by exclusively Hebrew populations; that posed by the fact that most of the vital centers of large cities were under Jewish control; the alarming percentage of Jews in schools—often reaching an absolute majority—which was tantamount to preparing their invasion and hegemony in the professional sphere for the new generations. It was also necessary to denounce the despicable maneuvers taking place behind the scenes: as he had already done during the Communist era by revealing that the leaders of the so-called “Romanian proletarian movement” were all Jews without exception, Codreanu did not hesitate to reveal, this time as a member of Parliament, how the majority of men in government positions received so-called “loans” from Jewish banks.

When Mussolini came to power, Codreanu recognized him as a “bearer of light who inspires hope in us: that the hydra can be defeated, proof that we can win.” And he added: “But Mussolini is not anti-Semitic. ‘You rejoice in vain,’ whispers the Jewish press

in our ears. But I say that what matters is not that we rejoice, but that you are worried about his victory, that although he is not anti-Semitic, he is the target of attacks by the Jewish press around the world.”

What Codreanu had rightly seen was that Judaism had succeeded in dominating both the liberal world through Freemasonry and Russia through communism. By destroying communism and Freemasonry, he wrote, Mussolini implicitly declared war on Judaism. The recent anti-Semitic turn of fascism has only served to prove Codreanu right.

To shed further light on Codreanu's anti-Semitic attitude, it is worth quoting a passage from his book that demonstrates his particular clairvoyance: “Anyone who imagines that the Jews are poor wretches who came here by chance, carried by the wind or led by an adverse fate, is seriously mistaken. All Jews without exception throughout the world form a large community cemented by blood and Talmudic tradition. They are governed by a state in the literal sense, a ruthless state with its own laws, plans, and leaders to define these plans and carry them out: at the root of all this is the Cahal. As a result, we are never faced with isolated individuals, but with a constituted force: the Jewish community. In every country, every city, wherever a certain number of Israelites gather, the Cahal, or Jewish community, is immediately formed. This Cahal has its own leaders, its own justice system, etc. And it is in this small Cahal, at the level of a single city or even a country, that all plans are made: how to win over politicians or authorities; how to infiltrate all circles where it is useful to do so, such as magistrates, officers, senior civil servants, etc.; what course of action to take of an authority opposed to Jewish interests; what plan to implement when,

pushed to the limit, the local population revolts and explodes in anti-Semitic movements, and so on. In addition to this, there are general long-term plans: “1) They will seek to break the ties between Heaven and Earth by spreading atheistic and materialistic theories on a large scale, reducing the Romanian people—or, possibly, only their leaders—to a people separated from God and their dead: killing them not with the sword, but by amputating the very roots of their spiritual life; 2) Then they will attack what binds the race to its land, the material source of its wealth, by attacking nationalism and any idea of homeland and soil; 3) To achieve this, they will seek to seize control of the press; 4) They will seize upon every pretext to sow discord, misunderstanding, and dissent among the Romanian people and, if possible, divide them even further into antagonistic factions; 5) They will seek to seize ever more of the means of existence of the Romanians; 6) They will systematically lead them down the path of dissolution, ruining the family and moral strength, and not neglecting to poison them through alcoholism and other scourges. And, in truth, anyone who wanted to poison and conquer a race could achieve this by adopting this system. By all means, from the immediate post-war period until yesterday, Codreanu's movement has tried to fight on all fronts against this Hebrew offensive led in Romania by the two and a half million Jews present there and the forces affiliated with or financed by Israel.

The scourge represented by politicians and the need to create a “new man” are two other key ideas in Codreanu's thinking. “The type of man who exists today in Romanian political life,” wrote Codreanu, “I have already encountered in history: it was under his rule that nations died and states perished.” For him, the

great national peril lay in the fact that the pure type of the Romano-Dacian race had been distorted and disfigured and replaced by “the politician, that moral dwarf who has nothing left of the nobility of our race, who dishonors himself and commits suicide.” As long as it existed, the obscure anti-national forces would always find suitable instruments and would always be able to weave intrigues in the service of their double game. Although the Romanian Constitution of 1938 put an end to the party system, Codreanu had for years adopted a radical position on this issue, saying: “Any man who crosses the threshold of a political party is a traitor to his generation and his race.”

For it is not a question here of parties or new formulas, but of a “new man.” It was from this observation that Codreanu's legionary movement was born, which sought above all to be a school of life, a crucible for a new type of human being in which all the possibilities for human greatness that God had poured into the blood of our race would be fully developed. “Legion of the Archangel Michael” was the name of the first Legionary foundation, and the very choice of this name reveals the mystical, religious, and ascetic side of such nationalism. For Codreanu, the essential thing was the creation of a new type of human being: the rest was incidental, and through a natural and inevitable process, it followed that it was thanks to this type of regenerated man that the Jewish problem would be solved, that new political forms would be found, that the magnetism capable of transporting crowds and leading the race to glory would spring forth.

It is a particular and characteristic aspect of the Romanian Legionary Movement that, in its very organization into what are called “nests,” its fundamental concern is the creation of a new

form of community life imbued with rigid ethical and religious criteria. Many may therefore be surprised to learn that Codreanu imposed a two-day fast each week on all members of his movement, and his thoughts on prayer—which seem to have been formulated more by a religious figure than a political leader—are particularly interesting: “Prayer is a decisive factor in victory. Wars are won by those who have been able to draw from the ether, from the heavens, the mysterious forces of the invisible world and secure their support. These forces are the souls of the dead, the souls of our ancestors who were also, in their time, linked to our plots of land, to our furrows, who died in defense of this land and are still linked to it today through the memory of their lives and to us, their sons, grandsons, and great-grandsons. And then, above the souls of the dead, there is God. Once attracted, these forces tip the balance: they protect, they inspire courage, willpower, and everything else required for victory, and they make us victorious. They sow panic and terror among the enemy, paralyzing their actions. In the final analysis, victories do not depend solely on material preparation or the material forces of the belligerents, but on their ability to secure the support of spiritual forces. The justice and morality of our actions and our fervent appeal to them in the form of ritual and collective prayer attract such forces.” Another characteristic passage from Codreanu: ” If Christian mysticism, whose end is ecstasy, is the contact between man and God through a leap from human nature to divine nature, national mysticism is nothing other than the contact between man and the masses with the soul of their race through a leap they make from the world of their personal and material interests to the eternal world of the race. Not just mentally, because any historian can do that, but by living it with all their soul.” Another typical aspect of the “Iron Guard”

legionary spirit was the kind of “ascetic” commitment of its leaders: they had to avoid any display of wealth or simple comfort. A special corps of ten thousand men—called “Mota and Marin,” after two leaders of the Iron Guard who fell in Spain—imposed on its members, like certain ancient orders of chivalry, the clause of celibacy in order to be part of such a corps: so that no place, whether worldly or family-related, could diminish their ability to throw themselves to their deaths at any moment.

Although he twice served in Parliament as a deputy, Codreanu asserted himself from the outset as a declared opponent of democracy; in his own words, democracy destroys the unity of the race through the party system; it is incapable of sustained effort and, like the sense of responsibility, lacks a sense of authority: it has no power to punish and makes politicians slaves to their supporters; it serves high finance; it transforms millions of cosmopolitan citizens into Romanians. Conversely, Codreanu affirmed the principles of social selection and elitism. The latter had a very accurate intuition of the new politics peculiar to nations wishing to start afresh on new foundations, whose principle is neither democracy nor dictatorship, but a relationship between the nation and its leader, comparable to that which exists between power and action, between obscure instinct and its expression. The leader of these new political forms is not elected by the crowd, but it is the crowd, the nation, that agrees with him and recognizes its own ideas in his. The premise is a kind of inner awakening that originates with the leader and the elite. Let us quote Codreanu's own words: “It is a new form of government, a form never seen before. I do not know what name it will take, but I know that it is new. I believe that at its core, it involves a state of mind, a state of high national consciousness that first, or later,

gradually spreads to the periphery of the social organism. It is a state of inner clarity. What until then lay dormant in people's hearts as a racial instinct is reflected, outside such moments, in their consciousness, creating a state of unanimous illumination that is only found in great religious experiences. And precisely, one could call this state a state of national ecumenicity. In this way, a people, in its integrity, becomes aware of itself, its meaning, and its destiny in the world. In history, we have encountered nothing else among peoples but flashes in the pan: from this point of view, we are today confronted with permanent national phenomena. At that point, the leader is no longer a "boss" who does "what he wants" and governs according to his "whim": he is the expression of this invisible spiritual state, the symbol of this state of consciousness. He no longer does what he wants, but what he must. He is not judged on the basis of individual or even collective interests, but on those of the eternal nation of which the peoples are now conscious. Within the framework of these interests, and within this framework alone, they will naturally find the most complete satisfaction of both their individual and collective interests.

That Codreanu does not exclude the possibility that these new forms of nationalism can be reconciled with traditional institutions is eloquently proven by his own ideas on the institution of monarchy. Judge for yourself: "I reject the republic. At the head of ethnic groups, above the elite, there is the monarchy. While not all kings have been good monarchs, the monarchy, on the other hand, has always been good. Man must not be confused with the institution, otherwise false conclusions will be drawn. There may be bad priests, but that is not a sufficient reason to conclude that we must separate ourselves

from the Church and stone God. There are undoubtedly weak or bad kings, but it is impossible to renounce monarchy. There is a lifeline for the race. It is when the monarch remains on this lifeline that he is great and good, and he is small and bad to the extent that he strays from this lifeline of the race—or when he opposes it. There are many other lines that can tempt a monarch: he must reject them all and follow only that of the race. Such is the law of monarchy.”

If these are, in broad outline, the ideas of Codreanu and his “Iron Guard,” the vicissitudes of his struggle are tragically incomprehensible: only yesterday, they seemed to be the plaything of some horrible misunderstanding. We say “only yesterday” because, insofar as a pure democratic system still existed in Romania—with its well-known subservience to all kinds of indirect influence or behind-the-scenes manipulation and its purely symbolic monarchical institution—it was understandable that a movement such as Codreanu's would be thwarted by all means and at any cost by the system in place. Today, however, in the name of practically opposite principles, for reasons of opportunism, the effects are identical and the enemy is advancing openly. How can we fail to understand Codreanu's bitter observations: “In the years 1919, 1920, and 1921, the entire press, which was in the hands of the Jews, launched an assault on the Romanian state, unleashing disorder everywhere and inciting violence against the regime, the institutions, the Church, the Romanian order, the national idea, and patriotism. Today (in 1936), as if by magic, the same press, in the hands of exactly the same men, has set itself up as the protector of order, the state, and the laws; it declares itself against all violence, and we have become the enemies of the country, the “right-wing

extremists,” in the pay and service of the enemies of Romanianism. And before long, we can bet that we will also hear that we are subsidized by the Jews!” And Codreanu continues: “We have received on our cheeks and in our hearts as Romanians, sarcasm after sarcasm, slap after slap, until we find ourselves in this appalling situation: the Jews as defenders of Romanianism, sheltered from all trouble, living in peace and abundance! And we, as enemies of Romanianism, threatened in our freedom and our lives, hunted like mad dogs by the Romanian authorities. I saw with my own eyes and lived through those hours, filled with bitterness to the depths of my soul. To fight for your land, your soul as pure as the apple of your eye, and to fight for years and years in poverty, hiding the hunger that gnaws at your stomach, and then to see yourself designated on the list of enemies of the country because you are paid by foreigners—and to see the Jews as masters of the country, elevated to the role of guardians of Romanianism and the Romanian state, threatened by you, the youth of the country, is something appalling!”

That all of the above is not mere literature, the reader can see for himself by leafing through Codreanu's book, which contains extensive documentation on the via crucis of the “Iron Guard”: arrests, persecutions, trials, defamation, physical violence. Codreanu himself was the subject of numerous trials, all of which have so far ended in acquittal. Significantly, when he was charged with murder for killing the executioners of his comrades with his own hands, 19,300 lawyers from all over the country offered to defend him!

Following the Goga cabinet experience, the Romanian democratic regime seemed to come to an end, to be replaced by a new, this time authoritarian, form of government. Little is known

abroad about the background to this reversal. Although the Iron Guard was dissolved, this new phase in Romanian politics did not put an end to Codreanu's struggle against opponents of his conception of the nation and the state. It should be noted that the Goga government was formed as an experiment and, at the same time, for very specific tactical purposes. With Goga's moderate nationalism and anti-Semitism, the aim was to divert the forces that Codreanu's movement was attracting and which were joining it in ever-increasing numbers: basically, it was a question of offering an easily acceptable substitute. To use Mussolini's phrase about the plebiscite proclaimed by Shuschnigg, it soon became clear that the experiment was dangerous and that the machine could well slip out of the hands of those who had prepared it. For the Goga regime was not seen as a substitute with which one had to be content, but rather as a preliminary sign of a rallying to the cause of integral nationalism: it mattered little that Goga was a declared opponent of Codreanu (and this had been one of the reasons for his choice); what mattered more was his program, which was in line with nationalism and anti-Semitism, as well as with a revision of Romanian international policy. This is why, had the elections announced by Goga taken place, he would have been swept away by a movement that, although of the same origin, would have been stronger than him.

Aware of this danger, the king decided to intervene personally. He put an end to the democratic regime and promulgated a constitution whose main purpose was to concentrate power, directly or indirectly, in the hands of the monarch. It was an authoritarian revolution originating, as they say, both from the court and from the public square. Seeing this, the Iron Guard

decided to voluntarily dissolve the “All for the Fatherland” party it had created in order to prevent any maneuvers by its adversary. It withdrew quietly, proposing to concentrate its activities mainly on the spiritual level, devoting itself henceforth to spiritual training and the selection of new members who, in recent times—mainly because everyone considered the Goga government to be a temporary phase—had joined Codreanu's ranks.

We were in Romania at the time, and the solution that seemed most desirable and likely to the most serious Romanian observers was to put an end to the old quarrel between the regime and the Legionnaires and replace it with collaboration on a national basis. This was not simply the opinion expressed by the leading Romanian theorist of the state, Manoilescu, or by people who, like Nae Ionescu, had played a significant role in the King's return to his homeland: even Minister Agetoianu, the main inspiration behind the constitution, did not rule out such collaboration in a conversation we had with him, on condition—in his own words—that the “Iron Guard” renounce its old methods.

We would be the last here to dispute that, under normal conditions, when the monarchy enjoys the fullness of its power and significance, it has no need to be backed up by a dictatorship in order to function properly. But things are different in a state where political intrigue has replaced traditional loyalty, where the stateless hydra has spread its tentacles over most of the vital centers of the nation, where party democracy has undermined the ethical integrity and patriotic sentiment of vast political sectors. When this is the case, what is needed is a totalitarian movement of renewal, something that, in a comprehensive manner, drives, establishes, transforms, and raises the entire nation to a higher

level, based on a new state of consciousness and on the forces represented by an ideal and a faith. And the monarchical institution, when present, is not diminished by such a totalitarian national movement: on the contrary, it is enhanced and complemented by it, as the example of Italy itself demonstrates. In this context, collaboration between the new regime and Codreanu's legionary movement was therefore considered desirable and possible, all the more so since, as we have seen, Codreanu unreservedly defended the idea of monarchy and never considered—nor did his own opponents ever suppose—that he would claim the throne of Romania.

Recent events have demonstrated the futility of such hopes and have only precipitated the drama. Shortly after the final approval of the new constitution, Codreanu was once again placed under arrest. On what grounds? First, many months later, it was pretended that he had insulted a minister in office, even though this was practically all he had done throughout his political career, spurred on by circumstances. A little later, he was accused of plotting against state security... But the truth is that Codreanu's arrest took place almost the day after the Anschluss, and it is very likely that this was motivated solely by the fear that, echoing the triumph of Austrian National Socialism, the forces of Romanian nationalism, which had hitherto been kept in check, would sweep everything away. It was therefore decided, by one means or another, to get rid of their leader. At the end of the trial, Codreanu was sentenced to ten years' imprisonment and a whole series of secondary leaders were arrested at the same time, along with a large number of people suspected of belonging to the "Guard" or of sympathizing with it. Everyone in Romania realized that such measures were intended to provoke

confrontation and that the political and national situation was still far from stable. What everyone could also see was that while the previous trials against Codreanu—at a time when his opponents enjoyed every advantage through democratic corruption—had invariably ended in his acquittal, this time, under the auspices of the new anti-democratic and “national” constitution, Codreanu was being condemned!! This could only be taken as a challenge to all the forces of Romanian national legionism, which, although latent and scattered, were still present and numerous. Although nothing very precise managed to filter out of this last trial, it was quite clear that the sentence was either excessive or insufficient: for if Codreanu could really be convicted of conspiracy against state security, given the animus that had led to this trial, there was an excellent opportunity to put him out of action once and for all, since the new constitution provided for the death penalty for this type of offense. However, the sentence was limited to ten years in prison.

What had not been dared at that time was done later, and what was predictable inevitably happened. Once the initial shock had passed, forces loyal to Codreanu launched a terrorist campaign of “reprisals.” The “death battalion” entered the scene, and a secret “national tribunal” was set up to judge and strike down all those who, from the Legionnaires' point of view, were attacking the nation. This change of attitude reached its peak after the capitulation of Prague and the Munich Agreement, but ultimately only led to a situation that became more difficult with each passing day: from then on, arrests multiplied, injustice begetting injustice; recently, the rector of the University of Cluj, a figure particularly hostile to the Guard, was assassinated; two provincial governors received death sentences from the mysterious

Legionary “national tribunal,” to be carried out in January... The situation has reached such a point of no return that very high-ranking figures—including a prince of the blood and General Antonescu, former Minister of War under the Goga government and currently commander of Army Corps No. II—have been either dismissed, exiled, or placed under arrest. Events are moving rapidly and, under the pressure of general unrest, we have now reached the final act of the tragedy. On November 30, a terse official communiqué announced that Codreanu, along with thirteen other legionnaires belonging to the movement's leadership and arrested with him, had been shot by the police during an “escape attempt.” Their bodies were reportedly buried three hours later, after the usual formalities had been carried out—almost immediately, in order to cut short any possibility of further investigation.

The tension had thus reached its peak, and the repercussions of this event throughout Romania, where Codreanu's followers now numbered in the millions, were enormous. The state of siege that was in force in several regions has just been extended to the whole country: rarely in its history has Romania experienced such troubled times.

What must be remembered at the end of this account is that: either Codreanu was acting in the worst possible bad faith—a hypothesis that anyone who has approached him even for a moment, anyone who has felt the faith, enthusiasm, and profound sincerity expressed in even the slightest of his writings, cannot but reject—or it is impossible to admit that his movement had any subversive character, a goal that was in any case foreign to a “fascist” or national-socialist type of national reconstruction, especially since he respected the monarchical

principle. What conclusion can we draw? Well, it is only legitimate to question the true nature of the forces that caused, or at least contributed to, the tragedy of the “Iron Guard.” When Codreanu was arrested for the last time, we were in Paris and heard a veritable howl of delirious joy accompany the news of his arrest in the specialized anti-fascist and stateless socialist press. It is no exaggeration to say that after Czechoslovakia, Romania is the last stronghold in all of Central Europe—with numerous resources that are valuable from both an economic and strategic point of view—that has remained immune to the forces at work in the “great democracies,” high finance, and stateless socialism. And for such forces, representing the interests of people incapable of a long-term vision, as a means and an end, and stepping over corpses—even those of a noble and generous youth who had devoted themselves solely to the service of their country—is nothing but child's play.

On the Aryan-Roman Resolution of Fascist Italy

The month of July 1938 was a turning point of particular importance for the revolutionary development of Fascist thought. Fascist Italy officially took a position on the race issue and the Jewish question, aligning itself with Germany. Although the fascist turning point on racial thinking should in no way be considered a passive imitation but, on the contrary, a logical development of our movement, it nevertheless marked the beginning of a phase of particular revolutionary significance for many aspects of Italian culture and mentality. Mussolini's slogan: "Everyone must know that we will march straight ahead, even on the question of race." The decision taken by the new Italy is as unequivocal as it is serious and demanding. We have affirmed what, until yesterday, no one among us dared to affirm and what appeared surprising to many circles, not only intellectuals but also nationalists of firm faith: namely, the fundamental significance of race for the construction of Italian culture, which must favor the Aryan character, but also the Aryan-Roman and Nordic-Aryan character of the Idea that must form the basis for the formation of our racial thinking and our Tradition.

"The conception of racial doctrine in Italy must be defined in a Nordic-Aryan sense."

These are the precise words of the manifesto established in agreement with the highest fascist authorities, which formed the basis for the fascist turn on race in July 1938. We can therefore

speaking without hesitation of a Nordic-Aryan resolution of Fascist Italy, which is determined to give a new direction to those forces which, although changing, are active in our culture and national character. The fact that the effects of such an influence are not yet particularly visible is not surprising, given that there are still many obstacles to overcome and coexistences to overcome. But we are facing up to the challenge. And the fact that we now have the German people at our side, who have recognized themselves in the same decision, will be of great advantage to us if the Italian-German cultural exchange does not end in unofficial and conventional conferences, as is unfortunately often the case, but on the contrary stimulates living and creative forces morally. We would just like to give an idea of what the Nordic-Aryan-Roman way of thinking means to us, as well as its main consequences in the popular, heroic, and historical spheres. Until yesterday, the Latin and Mediterranean myth played a major role for us. It was said: "We are Latin and Mediterranean, our people and our culture are Latin and Mediterranean." There is a Latin blood and a Latin cultural community. And this myth of the brotherhood of the Latin peoples was a useful weapon in the hands of those who yesterday wanted at all costs to create a contrast between Italy and Germany, and of those who today would like to convince us that there can be no understanding between the two nations beyond the effort of a purely political interest.

Now we have clarified the misunderstanding that exists in this field. What is meant by the term "Latin"? And in what context is this expression used? The circles and environments in which the myth of Latinism is particularly dear are symptomatically made up mostly of intellectuals and writers. And indeed, the expressions "Latin" and "Latin exultation" have meaning when

placed on an aesthetic, humorous, and literary level. Here, Latinism is more or less equivalent to the Roman element, which was the effect of the cultural activity of ancient Rome on certain peoples who, at that time, were part of the Roman Empire and adopted the language of Rome, that is, the Latin language. But this Latin character is something external. It is, in a way, a veneer that tries in vain to cover up profound differences of blood or spirit, differences that can lead—as history to the present day shows unequivocally—to the harshest and most irreconcilable divisions. Unity also appears on the philological level, but regardless of the fact that unity of language cannot give rise to unity of race, it is in any case discredited by the fact that the Latin language belongs to the general Aryan and Indo-Germanic language family. Thus, Latinism has nothing to do with the truly original and fertile energies that peoples should have in common. What great turning point in world history can be explained on the basis of Latin unity? Not only this, but we must also examine the meaning of the classical Greek-Roman world from which Latin culture derives and which humanists worship to the point of superstition.

This “classical” myth betrays an aesthetic and rationalist point of view. As far as Rome is concerned, like Greece, it shines for some as a classical culture which, for many of us, despite its outward splendor, is decadent. This civilization originated when the cycle of the first erotic, sacred, virile Aryan culture of Hellenic and Roman origins was dying out. It is important to note, however, that the expression “Latin” takes on a totally different meaning if we return to this world of origins, a meaning that fully recalls the aforementioned Latin myth. “Lateinisch” derives from “latinisch,” so that the Italian language has a single expression,

“latino,” for both. The expression “Latin” marked the original Italic tribes whose racial and spiritual kinship with the Nordic-Aryan peoples is indisputable. The Latins were a wave advancing towards central Italy of the so-called “ardent” race – the race that burns its dead – which later had to confront the culture of the Osco-Saballi, a people of buriers who had to occupy many parts of our land before the appearance of the Etruscans or the Zle Calti. Among the most remote traces of this race, from which the predecessors of the Romans descended, the Latins include those recently discovered in Val Canonica.

These traces are now believed to be closely related to those of the Aryan races, including the Nordic-Atlantic, Franco-Cantabrian, and Nordic-Scandinavian races. We do not find the same symbols of solar spirituality, the same style of drawing, or the same absence of Demeter-Telluric religiosity that, on the contrary, always recur in non-Aryan cultures, or degenerate Aryan cultures of the Mediterranean-Pelasgian region, such as the Cretans and Etruscans. Solar ships and reindeer runes abound in these prehistoric traces. They bear witness to a race of warriors and hunters who already used horses at that time, while elsewhere, until relatively late, only carts were seen. This representation links military spirit and sacredness in the symbols of this Italic culture of the Val Canonica. But that's not all: a further similarity can be seen between the traces in the Val Canonica and the culture of the Doci, the tribes that later moved south from the north to Greece, founded Sparta, and worshipped the sun god Apollo Hyperborean. In fact, according to Falthein and Teautmann, the migration of the peoples from whom the Latins and their relatives descended, and whose appearance in Italy led to the rise of Rome, can be seen as equivalent to the

historical emigration that led to the rise of Sparta in Greece: Rome and Sparta, two corresponding creations of races related in blood and spirit, which, for their part, are then to be related to the Nordic-Aryan races. Ancient Rome and Sparta, however, evoke the image of pure forces, of a severe athos, of a virile and imperious attitude, of a world that is not preserved in the subsequent so-called “classical” culture from which one would like to derive the “Latinity and unity of the Latin peoples.” Let us return instead to the Italian origins of the word “Latin” to realize the total reversal of the Latin concept. The original Latin character corresponds to everything that the great Rome could have had of Aryan: it takes us back to forms of life and culture that are not in contrast with those - indeed, apparently similar - that later, even the Nordic-Germanic races had to show in the face of a world that was more Roman or Byzantine than Latin. Beyond the outward veneer of unity, the supposed Latin character perhaps concealed contrasting elements that converged only when faced with something serious, such as the world of art and literature. Thus, in an instant, where a “Roman” Italy arose, in the strictest and most virile sense of the term, on the one hand, clearly, the failure and deception of the “Latin” myth emerged, and on the other, the premises for an understanding of our people and the German people, not only on the political level but also on the level of the deepest inclinations and the common *Weltanschauung*.

Mussolini said as early as 1925: “Throughout the centuries, as in the future, Rome is always the powerful heart of our race: it is the imperishable symbol of our deepest life.” The new racial consciousness deepens the meaning of this Roman symbol, which is the central moment of our movement and our aspirations. We

are entitled to place fascist Italianness and Romanity on the same level, so that the Nordic-Aryan element can once again have value for us as a guiding star. A solution must be found not only within Italian traditions, but also within those we share. There is an Aryan community which, through the symbols of the eagle's axe, the wolf and other signs, is marked by a Hyperborean heritage, and there is a mixed community in which the influx of pre-Aryan Italic tribes and degenerate Aryan cultures have played a particular role. Finally, there is a universal community in the worst sense, which has no roots in race or blood and comes from religious visions that we cannot always consider as peculiar. In the face of all this, we consider that our position is becoming increasingly clear. This Aryan-Roman revolution does not only concern our traditions, but also the Italian race. Just as the expressions "Italian race" or "German race," "Anglo-Saxon race," and even "Jewish race" are known, they are neither scientific nor appropriate. All peoples that exist today as nations are mixtures of races, and other elements than the essential ones generally serve as the foundation for their unity. The point of view of early nationalism was "historicist"; it accepted the people and the nation as accomplished realities, without considering the elements that make up a nation or the influences that determined its birth and development. Corresponding to this, a system of equilibrium was adopted as a political principle: an attempt was made to approximate the different forces and elements present in the nation and to keep them united, while the escape route to the democratic-parliamentary system was the most inconvenient solution. Moreover, the nation was valued as a myth, as a beautiful phrase for rhetorical speeches.

Fascism arrived at a totally different conception: the political foundation was no longer the system of democratic compromise, but the leadership of the state and the nation by an elite that embodied, above all others, the most valuable and deserving element and therefore had the right to give the whole people its own character. This leads to another position that is no longer “historicist” but rather peculiar to the problem of the nation. And in this contrast, racial thinking integrates and reinforces fascist thinking in both its popular and historical aspects. From the point of view of the people at the basis of our Nordic-Aryan and Aryan-Roman determination, there is the conviction that originally a superior race—namely, the Aryan-Roman race—existed among our people and that, thanks to the law of the indestructibility of hereditary factors, valuable and pure elements of this race can be found in the colorful composition that forms our nation. The Nordic-Aryan idea is therefore a common thread in the definition of the superior man peculiar to Italy and in the knowledge of what in our popular character is to be emphasized, pacified, and conquered for dominance. In this regard, we would like to mention another myth mentioned at the beginning, namely the Mediterranean myth. It is now time to prepare for the end of this myth as well. According to the Italian anthropology of the last century, which was influenced by Eben and was positive, an autonomous Mediterranean race originating in North Africa, to which most of the Italics belonged, as well as the Phoenicians and other crypto-Semitic peoples who had nothing to do with the Aryans, who, according to what is said, came from Asia, that such a thesis, for which we can specify the name of Sergi today, is scientifically outdated, there is no need to emphasize it.

However, this is not just a matter of anthropological interpretations. It is a fact that, even abroad, a distorted image of what should have been specifically Italian has been widespread for too long: elements that are sometimes found in our people have been considered Italian, but they certainly did not represent the best of what we are. This is precisely the Mediterranean type described by Clauss as a showman: generally speaking, it is a type between pre-Asian and Oriental, characterized by chaotic individualism, a tendency toward extroversion and grand gestures, and a disorderly vitality. This "Mediterranean" type of human being is as exuberant and noisy as he is weak in character, with limited inner balance, mainly conditioned by feelings and instinct. This is where we find gesticulating individuals, handsome tenors and sailors singing "O sole mio," the classic type of the southern lover, with his compassionate talk and theatrical gallantry, as well as the type of woman who so artistically emphasizes her femininity with superficial and meaningless complications. Although such types are certainly not found only in Italy, many will have to admit that in our country they consider such types to be specifically Italian. We tend to see in them the reflection of certain picturesque aspects of our countryside and pay no attention to many other factors, equally present in our people, which undoubtedly presuppose another means and another style: perhaps because they are similar to the peoples of Central Europe and because we prefer the exotic. Now, the Italy of the future will bring ever greater disappointment to those who seek, above all, this caricature of Italians among us. We want to have as little to do as possible with this Mediterranean element, and we will do everything in our power to ensure that this part of our people is gradually transformed by the power of the ideal of a superior man. Fascist Italy also demands a fascist

man, Roman and Aryan-Roman, a man who is both new and ancient at the same time.

This type of superior race was, and still is, present in our people and is destined to emerge more and more. He does not necessarily have to be blond with blue eyes: instead of being slender, he may also be mesocephalic and in some cases of short stature: he will show the same harmonious proportions of the limbs of the Nordic man and, through the features of his high forehead, more or less curved nose, or accentuated jaw, he will give the same impression of every active, alert, attack-ready type. While in the less noble Mediterranean type, there is a hidden Aryan-Roman type that manifests itself as upright, firm, and energetic. Gesturing is foreign to him: his gestures are full of expression, but not exuberant or uncontrolled: movements that emphasize conscious thought. Compared to the Nordic type, the Aryan-Roman man often has a faster reaction time and is particularly capable of taking immediate action in the face of unexpected events. He is inwardly versatile and dynamic, but his dynamism is conscious and controlled, very different from disorderly liveliness. We must always strive to recognize the best and most essential part of our people in this type of true Italian. It is the original part that comes to light thanks to the evocative and transformative power of Fascist Italy. If we want to define exactly the ethics that befits our new racial and spiritual consciousness, it is sufficient to recall the main virtues attributed by various scholars of race to the Aryan type of ancient Roman conformation: prudent audacity, controlled attitude, concise and thoughtful speech, and an aristocratic sense of detachment. Furthermore, “virtus”, i.e. virtue not in the moralistic and conventional sense, but as virility and courage “fotitulo et

constantin”, i.e. strength of mind; “sapientin” or wise reflection; “humanitas” and discipline: this is the ideal of strict self-discipline which, however, allows for inner richness and versatility: “gravitas dignitas”. A dignified attitude and inner calm reinforce nobility, a measured solemnity, free from all vanity. Fides, or loyalty, was considered an Aryan and Roman virtue, where the difference between the Romans and the Barbarians was recognized. Roman and Aryan behavior was self-assured, without grand gestures, a reality that did not mean materialism at all: the ideal of clarity that only with the decline of the Latin peoples was to degenerate into rationalism. “Pietas” or “religio” had little to do with the later idea of deviation among the ancient Aryan-Romans: they represented a feeling of veneration and union in the face of transcendent forces that they felt were present and participating in their individual and collective lives.

The Aryan-Roman type always felt a difference towards any devotion of the soul and any confused mysticism: Semitic servility towards the deity was unknown to him. He felt that as a weak man humiliated by the feeling of sin and sinful flesh, he could not offer the deity a dignified worship but, on the contrary, he could do so as a free man, with a calm and proud soul, striving to identify the guidelines on which to harmonize his conscious and determined actions with the divine will. The world, like the state – *res publican* – was conceived by the Aryan-Roman man as a cosmos, a totality of different essences that were united, not by a mixture but by an intimate organic law. So too was the ideal of hierarchy in which the values of personality and freedom were reconciled in a high unity. Neither liberalism nor collectivism: to each his own. Women were neither placed too low, as in certain Asian cultures, nor too high, as in so-called matriarchal or

aphrodisiac cultures and, in our time, as in a certain Anglo-Saxon civilization that we can undoubtedly consider degenerate. In any case, with regard to women, as with regard to such a marked erotic complex, at least for certain Mediterranean types. A decisive affirmation of civil rights and of the authority of the head of the family or clan. And finally, an almost feudal sense of responsibility and loyalty on the part of this lord towards his state. These are all fundamental traits of the Roman and Aryan-Roman way of life. We see in them the spiritual counterpart of that physical form of superior Aryan-Roman humanity of which we have already spoken. For us, they are the essential elements of the idol of our “superior race.”

Finally, we can consider the effects of the Nordic-Aryan and Aryan-Roman resolution on our history. This history also has its dark sides, so when considering it, we must review many aspects that, until yesterday, appeared dominant due to the considerable influence exerted by Masonic and historicist democratic thinking. As already mentioned, we must also be able to distinguish between different aspects of Romanity. We are beginning to reawaken a feeling of the underground struggle through which the ancient Aryan-Roman element came to dominate for a long period, freed itself from foreign influences, or imprinted what was exotic and foreign with the seal of its superior culture and civilization. We are already beginning to distinguish in the field of Roman law, where we separate the later positivistic, formalistic, and universalistic forms from the original ones in which blood, lineage, and family played a special role and were based on sacred, heroic, and spiritual qualities. We also examine the significance of some great Roman figures: for example, rather than the Caesar with almost Napoleonic traits who is dear to many, we are drawn

to the Caesar who once said: “In me, the majesty of the King is fused with the sanctity of the Gods, under whose power even those who are lords of men stand.” We do not perceive as mere rhetoric the fact that Augustus symbolically united his meaning with Apollo, the Hyperborean sun god: even the fact that the Empire of Augustus heralded the rebirth of the Golden Age, that is, of that primordial age whose King was thought to be hidden and dormant in the Arctic region, the primordial homeland of the Aryan race—even in this circumstance, it suggests a profound mystery about the destiny of Rome.

Even the decline of the Empire of the Caesars must be rich in lessons for us. It would have been logical that as the Roman Empire expanded, measures should have been taken to defend and strengthen the original Aryan-Roman heritage that had made it great. Instead, the opposite happened: the more the world empire expanded, the more the “race of Rome” declined: it opened itself irresponsibly to every influence of minorities and foreign races: it elevated every mixed element to the dignity of Roman and accepted cults and customs that, in many cases, were in stark contrast – as Livy also pointed out – to Roman origins. Often, the Caesars worked to create a vacuum around themselves. Instead of relying on those faithful representatives of ancient Romanity who were still capable of standing on their own feet, in their race and in their ethics, they adopted the symbols of absolutism and believed in the miraculous power of their divine office, which had become abstract, isolated, and rootless. It was impossible for the Empire, once it had fallen to such a level, to continue to rule for long over the various peoples within its territory. The first serious attacks from outside were bound to result in the collapse of the immense but now disjointed

organism. In the Middle Ages, the Church attempted to revive the supranational Roman symbol, which united the ideas of a new faith or a new imperial order, the *Sacrum Imperium*. The Italian people barely participated in the formation of this symbol: a nucleus that placed itself, racially and spiritually, at the summit of this symbol and purified it of certain ambiguous aspects. Instead, the “Mediterranean” components prevailed, that is, the anarchic, particularistic, individualistic forces that created strife and discord and had already led to the Corvinian cities. In addition, there was a significant decline in the general ethical level. Hence the well-known harsh words with which Barbarossa legitimately stigmatized those who still felt Roman by virtue of their name. The consequence was that the imperial crown, although it continued to define itself as Roman, ended up in the hands of other peoples and not ours: mainly in those of the Germanic peoples, in whom certain racial characteristics were preserved to a high degree. Thus, Italy played a marginal role in the building of the Roman-Germanic civilization of the Middle Ages.

We therefore see today two eloquent examples of the dangers to which every imperial order is exposed if it is not supported by a solid racial foundation. As far as the choice of traditions that the Aryan racial consciousness demands, in view of Italy's subsequent history, we must modify many current opinions. Thus, for example, we cannot identify ourselves at all with the Italy of the communes that rose up against imperial authority. In this case, it was not – as many have believed – a “national uprising,” a struggle of our people against foreigners, but a struggle between the representatives of two opposing cultures. On the side of the Emperor—for him and against the communes—fought Italian

princes such as the Savoy and the Monferrato, representing an aristocratic culture that still retained much of its Aryan and Nordic character. As for the communes, they mainly represented opposition to the doctrine of the state: they were armed with intolerance towards any form of higher authority, and their league was so ancient that it soon broke up into a series of endless conflicts and discord. This was regardless of the mercantile and democratic character of our culture, which was very different from the Roman style, and which the communal cities developed. For these reasons, we do not want to consider the Guelph and communal Italy as our own, but rather the Ghibelline Italy of Dante. And here it should be remembered that Dante represented not only racial thinking but also, in union with Rome, the idea of the imperial right of a superior people: “*mobilissimo popolo convenit omnibus aliis penferri*” (the most mobile people agree with all others to suffer). But he was not understood. The Italy of the time had little in common with the Roman tradition.

Similarly, we cannot consider Italy's contribution to humanistic culture and, in general, to the so-called Renaissance, as entirely positive. Despite its outward splendor, this humanistic culture, from a higher point of view, signified a decline in standards and the tearing apart of a serious and profound tradition. It was the result of the disorderly individualism expressed in the style of the Signorie and the endless conflicts between Italian cities and their leaders; it contained the seeds that would reveal their true nature in the Enlightenment, rationalism, naturalism, and other modern forms of decadence. On the other hand, at the root of the supposed revival of the ancient world through humanism, there was a serious misunderstanding: only the “classical” aspects that we have already indicated as negative

were revived, that is, the external and non-racial aspects of ancient culture, and not the original, heroic, sacred aspects linked to tradition. It is precisely due to the “tradition” of the Renaissance that Italy was, until yesterday, considered a wonderful land of museums and monuments, inhabited, however, by a people who did not enjoy the best reputation in the political and ethical fields. Thus, it seems necessary to revise the Italian values of the Risorgimento and the World War. We are now well aware of the indisputable role played in the Risorgimento – that is, in the movement for Italian national unity – by Freemasonry, French Jacobinism and, in general, an ideology which, due to its liberal and democratic character, is fundamentally hostile to the race and alien to Aryan values. In fact, it was the so-called national movements that, even in Italy, began in 1848 – links in a single chain of episodes of a general and systematic plan – with the help of the myth of popular freedom and the democratic nation, to destroy what remained of the traditional dynastic regimes in Europe.

The same can be said of our entry into the war in 1915. Italy entered the war for national interests, but mainly under the banner of ideological hypocrisy, democratic-Masonic hypocrisy, of the Allies and the dark forces of world subversion which, in the name of this “humanitarian” war, aimed to destroy the states that still preserved a hierarchical structure and a sense of race and tradition. The Freemasons who gathered in Paris in 1917 from all over the world and who, even then, were already planning the general guidelines for the future diktat, clearly stated that it was a matter of peace: the world war was intended to take the movement that began with the French Revolution a paradoxical step forward. For Italy, however, the war was a heroic trial: it

reawakened the deep energies of the people which, thanks to an effective transformation, were to lead to Fascist, Roman, and racially conscious Italy and to our alliance with Germany. Thus, today, a myth is being realized that I defended eleven years ago in a provocative book: the myth of the double eagle, the Roman and the Germanic, the unity of Roman and Germanic forces for the configuration of a new West. With this, we believe we have given an idea of the essence and new positions of fascist Italy in the various fields of our popular and cultural life: it is a cultural change that has the significance of a new revolutionary impulse and the beginning of a new phase in our development. We have already mentioned, and indeed have no reason to hide, that in Italy there are still many forces opposing this development, above all through passive resistance and silent resistance, which sometimes characterizes a certain bureaucracy. But just as we are certain of winning the war we are fighting alongside the German people, so too are we certain of winning this internal cultural struggle, the consequences of which will be no less significant than the others. We are aware that the more determined we are in this struggle, in this building of an authentically Aryan-Roman Italy, the more it will be possible to act in depth and achieve our goals.

The Aryan Ethos: Loyalty to One's Own Nature

Today, more than ever, one must understand that social problems, in their essence, are rooted in problems of ethics and world-view. Anyone who thinks that social problems can be solved through purely technical means, is like a doctor who only wants to treat the patent symptoms of a disease, rather than examining and treating its deep causes. The greater part of the crises, disorders, and unresolved tensions that characterize modern Western society depend not simply on material factors, but, to at least an equal degree, on the surreptitious substitution of one world-view by another. This new attitude towards oneself and towards one's own destiny has been celebrated as a triumph, when in fact it represents a deviation and a degeneration.

Particularly relevant to the issues that will be discussed here is the opposition between the modern "activistic," individualist ethic and the traditional and Aryan doctrine concerning "one's own nature."

In all traditional civilizations — all those that the empty arrogance of historicism dismisses as "antiquated" and the Masonic ideology deems to be "obscurantist" — the principle of a fundamental equality of human nature was always an alien notion, and considered an obvious aberration. Every being has, from birth, its own "nature," which is to say, its own face, its own quality, its own personality, albeit more or less differentiated. According to the oldest Aryan and classical teachings, this was not viewed as the result of chance, but as an intimation of a kind of decision or determination prior to the human condition of

existence itself. In any case, this fact of having “one’s own nature” was never viewed as a destiny. One is unquestionably born with certain tendencies, certain vocations and inclinations, sometimes patent and clearly defined, sometimes latent and only manifesting themselves under particular circumstances or when subjected to certain tests. But everyone has a margin of freedom with respect to this innate, differentiated element, which is linked to birth, if not — as expressed by the teachings mentioned previously — to something coming from far away, preceding birth itself.

This is where the opposition between two paths and ethical attitudes manifests itself: between the traditional and the “modern.” The cornerstone of the traditional ethos is to be oneself and to remain loyal [true] to oneself. One must know what one “is,” and will it, rather than attempt self-realization in a form that is different from what one is.

This in no way implies passivity or quietism. Being oneself is always, to some degree, a task, a “standing firm.” It implies a strength, an uprightness, a development. But here, this strength, uprightness and development are grounded in, and an extension of, innate dispositions. They are linked to character, and manifest themselves in traits of harmony, self-coherence and organic wholeness. In other words, man orients his existence towards being “all of one piece.” His energies are directed towards potentiating and refining his nature and his character and defending it against every alien tendency, against every altering influence.

It was thus that ancient wisdom formulated maxims such as these: “If men impose upon themselves a norm of action that is not in conformity with their nature, this must not be considered

a norm of action.” And further: “One’s own duty, even if imperfectly performed, is better than doing the duty of another perfectly. To die while performing one’s own duty is preferable; doing the duty of another carries great dangers with it.” This loyalty to one’s own way of being even took on a religious value: “Man realizes perfection,” an ancient Aryan text (the Bhagavad-gita) states, “when he worships him from which all living things proceed and who pervades all beings, by fully actualizing his own way of being.” And also: “Always do what must be done (in accordance with your own nature), without attachment, because he who acts with an active disinterestedness accomplishes the Supreme.”

Unfortunately, it has become common, today, to be horrified by any mention of the caste system. “Castes”?! Today people no longer even talk of “classes,” and barely of “social categories.” Today, “stagnating divisions” are overcome, and the “people” is embraced.

The prejudice against the caste system is due to ignorance, and can in the best of cases be explained by the fact that, rather than considering the principles upon which a system is based, one dwells upon its deviant, empty or degenerating forms. First of all, it should be noted that “caste” in the traditional sense has absolutely nothing to do with “class,” the latter being an artificial division on an essentially materialistic basis, while caste is linked to the theory of an authentic nature and the ethos of loyalty to one’s own nature. For this reason — furthermore — there often existed a natural, *de facto* caste system, without any need for a positive institutionalization, and hence without the term caste or a similar word even being used; this was, to a certain extent, the case in the Middle Ages.

In recognizing his own nature, traditional man also recognized his “place,” his proper function, and just relations of superiority and inferiority. In principle, the castes, or equivalents of castes, prior to defining social groups, defined functions, typical ways of being and acting. The fact of the correspondence between, on the one hand, the individual’s own nature — innate tendencies which subsequently are affirmed — and on the other hand, a function, determined the fact of his belonging to a corresponding caste, in such a way that he could recognize in the duties of his caste the normal unfolding and development of his own nature.

Thus, in the traditional world, the caste system often appeared as a calm, natural institution, founded not on exclusion, arbitrariness or the abuse of power by a minority, but on something that was self-evident to everyone. Fundamentally, the well-known Roman principle of *sum cuique tribuere* is based on the same idea: to each his own. Since beings are unequal, it is absurd to demand that everyone have access to everything, and to claim that anyone, in principle, is qualified to perform any and every function. That would mean a deformation, a denaturing.

The difficulties that arise in the minds of those who look at the current conditions, quite different from the system being discussed, come from imagining cases in which the individual manifests a vocation and talents different from those appropriate to the group in which he finds himself by birth and tradition. However, in a normal world, such cases have always been exceptions, for a precise reason: because in those times, the values of blood, race and family were naturally recognized, and in this way, a biological, hereditary continuity of vocation, qualifications and traditions was maintained. This is the counterpart of the

ethic of being oneself: minimizing the possibility of birth actually being a matter of chance, and hence of the individual being rootless, in disharmony with his environment, with his family and even with himself, with his own body and his own race. Moreover, it must be emphasized that in the aforementioned civilizations and societies, materialistic and utilitarian factors were to a large extent subordinated to higher values, which were inwardly experienced. Nothing seemed more worthy than following one's own tradition, than performing one's natural activity, than following the vocation truly appropriate to one's own mode of being, however humble or modest it might be: so much so, that it was even conceivable that he who keeps within his station in life and performs its duties with purity and impersonality, has the same dignity as a member of any of the "higher" castes: an artisan could be the equal of a member of the warrior aristocracy or a prince.

It was from this that developed the sense of dignity, quality, and conscientiousness that manifested itself in all traditional professions and organizations; the style, by virtue of which a blacksmith, carpenter or shoemaker did not appear as men degraded by their condition, but almost as "lords," as persons who had freely chosen and exercised their activities, with love, always giving it a personal and qualitative stamp, keeping themselves aloof from the unmitigated concern for gain and profit.

The modern world, however, has by and large traveled the opposite path, the path of the systematic neglect of one's own nature, the path of individualism, of restlessness and social climbing. Here, the ideal is no longer to be what one is, but to "construct" oneself, to involve oneself in all kinds of activities,

randomly, or for completely utilitarian reasons; no longer to actuate one's own being with serious consistency, loyalty and purity, but to use all of one's strength to become what one is not. While individualism — the atomized, nameless, raceless, and traditionless man — is the foundation of this way of looking at things, its logical consequence has been the demand for equality, i.e., the claiming of the right to be able to be, in principle, everything that anyone else might be, while refusing to recognize any differences as more true and just than those artificially created by oneself, in terms of this or that form of a materialized and secularized civilization.

As is well-known, this form of deviancy has reached its extreme form in the Anglo-Saxon and puritan nations. Along with them, the masonic Enlightenment, democracy, and liberalism have formed a common front. Things have reached the point where many see innate and natural differences as being brute contingent facts, where every traditional point of view is seen as obscurantist and anachronistic, and one does not sense the absurdity of the idea that everything should be open to everyone, that everyone has equal rights and equal duties, that there is only one morality, which should be imposed in the same measure on everyone, in complete indifference towards different natures and different inner dignities. This is also the basis of every form of anti-racism, the denial of the values of blood and the traditional family. Thus, one can rightly speak here, without undue delicacies, of a real “civilization” of the “casteless,” of pariahs, who pride themselves in being such.

It is precisely within the framework of such a pseudo-civilization that classes come into being. Class has nothing to do with caste, it has no organic and traditional basis, but is instead

an artificial social grouping, determined by extrinsic factors which are almost always of a materialistic nature. Class almost always arises on an individualistic basis, in the sense that it is the “place” that brings together all those who, through their enterprise, have climbed to the same social position, in complete independence of what they by nature truly are. These artificial groupings then tend to crystallize, thereby generating the tensions known to all. In fact, the disintegration characteristic of this type of “civilization” accomplishes the degradation of the “arts” to mere “work,” the transformation of the old artificer or artisan into the proletarianized “worker,” whose activity is reduced to being only a means of earning money, and who is only capable of thinking of “salaries” and “working hours.” Little by little, artificial needs, ambitions, and resentments are aroused in him, since in the end the “upper classes” no longer display any quality that might justify their superiority and their possession of a larger quantity of material goods. Thus, class struggle is one of the ultimate consequences of a society that has been denatured, and considers this denaturing, the neglect of one’s own nature and of tradition, to be a triumph and a form of progress.

Here, too, a racial background can be taken into consideration. The individualist ethic undoubtedly corresponds to a condition of the mixing of peoples and stocks, to the same extent that the ethos of being oneself corresponds to a state of prevalent racial purity. Where races are mixed, vocations become confused, it becomes more and more difficult to see clearly into one’s own being, and inner instability, which is a sign of a lack of true roots, increases. Race-mixing promotes the emergence and reinforcement of the consciousness of man as “individual,” and it also favors activities that are “free,” “creative” in the anarchic

sense, shrewd “skill” and “intelligence” in the rationalistic and sterile, critical sense: all of this at the expense of the qualities of character, the dimming of the sense of dignity, of honor, of truth, of uprightness, of loyalty. Thus, a spiritually tortuous and chaotic situation is established, which, however, seems normal to many of our contemporaries. The cases of individuals full of contradictions, whose lives lack any meaning, who no longer know what they want beyond material things, who are at odds with their own tradition, their own birth and their natural destination, no longer appear to them as anomalies or monstrosities, but as part of the natural order of things, which then supposedly proves that every limit set by tradition, race and birth is artificial, absurd and oppressive.

This fundamental opposition of ethics and general vision of life, should, to a greater degree than has heretofore been the case, be taken into consideration by those who are concerned with social problems and talk of “social justice,” if they are actually to overcome the evils that they struggle with in good faith. There can be no rectifying principle, except where the absurd classist idea has been transcended by means of a return to the ethos of loyalty to one’s own nature, and hence to a well-differentiated and articulated social system. We have often said that Marxism, in many cases, did not appear because of a real “proletarian” destitution, but the other way around: it was Marxism that created a denatured proletarianized working class, full of resentment and unnatural ambitions. The most exterior forms of the evil that must be combated can be treated by means “social justice” in the sense of a more equal distribution of material goods; but its inner root will never be destroyed, without energetic action on the level of general world-view; without

reawakening the love for quality, personality, for one's own nature; without restoring the prestige of the principle, denied only in modern times, of a just difference, in conformity with reality, and if the right conclusions are not drawn from this principle on all levels, albeit with special consideration of the type of civilization that has become prevalent in the modern world.

PART II
ANTIQUITY

The Aryan Doctrine of Struggle and Victory

Note – Areté

Areté was the name given by the Greeks to that quality of virile preeminence that the Romans designated with the term *virtus*. In Homer, the word *areté* mostly has the meaning of “strength”, “excellence”, “virtue” — while for Herodotus, *areté* means “courage”, “valor”, “bravery”. Theognis and Pindar, the most illustrious exponents of Doric poetry, assert that *areté* cannot be conferred by any education, but can only exist by nature, in connection with the nobility of an untainted lineage. Virtue, therefore, according to the moralistic meaning in which the term is used today, has very little to do with *areté*. Consider, in this regard, the words of Zarathustra: “I pass among this people and keep my eyes open: they have become and are becoming ever smaller, and the cause of this is their doctrine of happiness and virtue. They are modest even in virtue, because they love their comfort. But comfort can only be reconciled with modest virtue. [...] For them, virtue is that which makes them modest and meek: therefore they turned the wolf into a dog, and man himself into the most domestic of animals.”

The current mindset tends to believe that romantic or vitalistic patriotic rhetoric on the one hand, and humanitarian pacifist rhetoric on the other, are irreconcilable and antithetical positions. In reality, the patriot and the defeatist agree on the typically modern underlying prejudice that war is devoid of any higher, spiritual meaning; it is in fact considered by both as a brute material fact (the idealistic choreography should not be

misleading), which the former will justify and exalt as an episode useful to the “greatness of the nation,” and the latter will condemn as a “useless slaughter.” Thus, while some, on the basis of a crude biological irrationalism, have exalted war as an outlet for the manifestation of pre-personal instincts, others, from the same point of view, have condemned it as a factor of biological selection in reverse. It is clear that, beyond the positive or negative evaluation of the experience of war, the modern judgment on war is, in essence, always the same, since it is equated with an animalistic conflict. (Moreover, it cannot be otherwise in a civilization that reduces man to a mere zoological variety).

Things are very different when considered in the light of Tradition.

In the conception of the ancient Aryan world, for example, war is the symbol, the tangible continuation of a metaphysical struggle: it is the effect of a clash between the celestial powers of the Kosmos, of form and light, and those of chaos, of unleashed nature, of darkness.

Thus, as far as heroism is concerned, what really matters to the man of Tradition is not a generic ability to throw himself into the fray, to despise danger, to face death, but rather the meaning according to which all this is experienced; and combat takes on, for such a man, the value and dignity of a ritual, of a “way” that leads, through victory and glory, to the overcoming of the human condition and the conquest of immortality.

The Doctrine of Struggle and Victory

The decline of the West, according to a well-known critic of civilization, is clearly recognizable by two salient characteristics: first, the pathological development of all forms of activism; second, the contempt for the values of inner knowledge and contemplation.

By knowledge, this critic does not mean rationalism, intellectualism, or vain literary games; by contemplation, he does not mean estrangement from the world, renunciation, or a misunderstood monastic detachment. Inner knowledge and contemplation represent, instead, the normal and most appropriate forms of human participation in the supernatural, superhuman, and superrational reality. Despite this clarification, at the basis of the above conception there is a premise that is unacceptable to us. It is tacitly assumed that all action in the material world is limiting and that the highest spiritual realm is accessible only by means other than action.

In this view, the influence of a conception of life that is essentially foreign to the spirit of the Aryan race is clearly recognizable. However, it is so deeply rooted in the Christianized Western way of thinking that it can even be found in Dante's imperial conception. The opposition between action and contemplation was unknown to the ancient Aryans. Action and contemplation were not conceived as two terms of an opposition. They designated only two distinct paths to the same spiritual realization. In other words, it was believed that man could overcome individual conditioning and participate in supernatural reality not only through contemplation, but also through action.

If we start from this point of view, then the progressive decline of Western civilization must be evaluated differently. The tradition of action is typical of the Aryan-Western races. However, this tradition has undergone a progressive deviation. Thus, the modern West has come to know and honor only secularized and materialized action, deprived of any transcendent point of contact—an action that has been desacralized, which inevitably had to degenerate into fever and mania and resolve itself into action for action's sake; or a doing that is linked only to effects conditioned by time. Such degenerate action finds no counterpart in the modern world in ascetic and authentically contemplative values, but only in a hazy culture and a dull and conventional creed. This is our point of reference for understanding the situation.

If the return to the origins is the watchword of every current movement of renewal, then it must be an indispensable task to become conscious again of the primordial Aryan conception of action. This conception must act as a transforming effect, evoking vital forces in the new man of good stock. Today, we want to venture a brief excursion into the cultural universe of the primordial Aryan world, with the aim of bringing to light once again some fundamental elements of our common tradition, with particular regard to the meaning of struggle, war, and victory.

For the ancient Aryan warrior, war essentially corresponded to an eternal struggle between metaphysical forces. On the one hand, there was the Olympian principle of light, the Uranian and solar reality; on the other, brute violence, the titanic-telluric element, barbaric in the classical sense, feminine-demonic. The theme of this metaphysical struggle recurs in a thousand ways in all traditions of Aryan origin. Any struggle in the material sense

was always experienced with greater or lesser awareness that it was simply an episode of that antithesis. But since Arianism considered itself the militia of the Olympian principle, so too among the ancient Aryans must be traced back to this view the legitimization or supreme consecration of the right to power and of the imperial conception itself, where the anti-secular character of the same is clearly evident in the background.

In the image of the traditional world, every reality became a symbol. This also applies to war from a subjective and inner point of view. Thus, war and the way of the divine could be fused into one and the same entity.

Everyone is familiar with the significant evidence offered by the North Germanic traditions. However, it should be noted that these traditions, as they have come down to us, are fragmentary and mixed, or represent the materialization of higher primordial Aryan traditions, which have often degenerated into popular superstitions. This does not prevent us from identifying certain motifs.

First of all, as is commonly known, Valhalla is the seat of heavenly immortality, reserved mainly for heroes who have fallen on the battlefield. The lord of these places, Odin-Wotan, is presented in the *Ynglingasaga* as the one who, with his symbolic sacrifice at the cosmic tree *Yggdrasil*, showed the way to warriors, a way that leads to the divine seat, where immortal life flourishes. In accordance with this tradition, no sacrifice or cult is more pleasing to the supreme god, and no one obtains richer otherworldly rewards than the sacrifice offered while dying in battle on the battlefield. There is more. Behind the dark popular representation of the “*Wildes Heer*” lies the following meaning:

through the warriors who, in falling, offer a sacrifice to Odin, the ranks of those whom this god needs for the final battle against the ragna-rokkr, that is, against the fatal “darkening of the divine,” which has loomed menacingly over the world since ancient times, are swelled. From here, therefore, the Aryan motif of metaphysical struggle clearly comes to light. In the Edda, it is also said: “However great the number of heroes gathered in Valhalla, there will never be enough when the Wolf breaks in”² — the Wolf here representing the image of dark and savage forces, which the world of the Aesir had managed to bind and subdue.

The Aryan-Iranian conception of Mithra, the “sleepless warrior,” who leads the Fravashi and his faithful into battle against the enemies of the Aryan god of light, is entirely analogous. We will discuss the Fravashi shortly and compare them with the Valkyries of the Norse tradition. Furthermore, we would like to further clarify the meaning of “holy war” through other, concordant testimonies.

It should come as no surprise that we will refer mainly to the Islamic tradition. The Islamic tradition stands here in place of the Aryan-Iranian. The idea of “holy war” — at least as far as the elements to be examined here are concerned — came to the Arab tribes from the Persian cultural sphere: it therefore had, at the same time, the meaning of a late Renaissance of a primordial Aryan heritage and, from this point of view, can certainly be used.

That said, two “holy wars” can be distinguished in the tradition in question, namely the “great” and the “small holy war”. This distinction is based on a saying of the Prophet, who, on his return from a military campaign, said: “We have returned from the small holy war to the great holy war”. In this context,

the great holy war belongs to the spiritual order. The small holy war, on the other hand, is the physical, material struggle, the war fought in the external world. The great holy war is man's struggle against the enemies he carries within himself. More precisely, it is the struggle of the supernatural element in man against everything that is instinctive, linked to passion, chaotic, subject to the forces of nature. This is also the idea that appears in the ancient treatise on warrior wisdom, the Bhagavad-gita: "Through the realization of that which is beyond the intellect, strengthen yourself through yourself and kill the enemy in the guise of desire, which is difficult to defeat."³ An indispensable condition for the inner work of liberation is that such an enemy must be destroyed once and for all.

In the context of a heroic tradition, the small holy war—that is, war as an external struggle—serves only as a means by which the great holy war is achieved. For this reason, "holy war" and "the way of God" often appear as synonyms in the texts. Thus we read in the Quran: "Those who sacrifice their earthly life for the sake of the life to come fight in the way of God (i.e., in holy war), for we will give a great reward to those who fight and die in the way of God, or to those who conquer."⁴ And further on: "And those who are killed in the way of God— He will never let their deeds be lost. He will guide them and give peace to their hearts. He will admit them to Paradise, which He reveals to them."⁵ Here, there is an allusion to physical death in war, to the so-called *mors triumphalis*—the "victorious death"—which finds its perfect counterpart in classical traditions. The same doctrine can, however, also be interpreted in a symbolic sense. Those who, in the "small," have been able to live a "great holy war," have created within themselves a force that enables them to overcome the crisis

of death. But even without being physically killed, they can, through the ascent of action and struggle, experience death, may have won inwardly, and realized a “more-than-life.” Esoterically understood, “Paradise,” “Kingdom of Heaven,” and similar expressions are, in fact, nothing more than symbols and representations, coined for the people, of transcendent states of illumination on a higher plane of life or death.

These considerations must also serve as a premise for rediscovering the same meanings beneath the outward appearance of Christianity, which the North-Western heroic tradition was forced to assume during the Crusades in order to manifest itself externally. Much more than one is generally inclined to believe, in the ideology of the Crusades, the liberation of the Temple and the conquest of the “Holy Land” had points of contact with the Nordic-Aryan tradition, which refers to the mythical Asgard, the distant land of the Aesir and the heroes, where death has no dominion and the inhabitants enjoy immortal life and supernatural peace. The holy war appeared to be a totally spiritual war, to the point that it could literally be compared by preachers to a “purification, like the fire of purgatory even before death.” “What greater glory for you than to emerge from battle crowned with laurels. But how much greater is the glory of winning an immortal crown on the battlefield,” Bernard of Clairvaux⁶ told the Templars. The “absolute glory”—the same that theologians attribute to God in the highest heavens (*in excelsis Deo*)—was also commanded to the crusaders. Against this backdrop stood Jerusalem, a “holy city” in two respects: as an earthly city and as a heavenly city — and the Crusade as an elevation that truly leads to immortality.

The alternating military fortunes of the Crusades initially produced wonder, confusion, and even wavering of faith, but followed, they only had the effect of purifying the idea of holy war of all traces of materialism. The unfortunate outcome of a Crusade was compared to virtue persecuted by misfortune, whose value can only be judged and rewarded in relation to a non-earthly life. Thus, beyond victory or defeat, the value judgment was focused on the spiritual aspect of the action. Thus, holy war was valuable in itself, regardless of its visible results, as a means of achieving superhuman fulfillment through the active sacrifice of the human element.

The same teaching, elevated to metaphysical expression, reappears in a well-known Indo-Aryan text, the Bhagavad-gita. The compassion and humanitarian feelings that prevent the warrior Arjuna from taking the field against the enemy are judged by the god: "Cowardly, unworthy of a noble, and who preclude heaven". The command sounds like this: "Killed, you will have paradise; victorious, you will rule the earth. Therefore, rise resolutely to battle."⁸ The inner disposition that can transform the small war into the great holy war already mentioned is clearly described as follows: "While you dedicate every action to me," says the god, "and your spirit is fixed in the supreme state of the Self, far from every thought of possession, free from fever in the spirit, fight."⁹ The purity of this action is affirmed in equally clear terms: it must be desired for its own sake, beyond any material end, beyond all passion and all human impulse. "While you place pleasure and pain, advantage and loss, victory and defeat on the same level of value, armed for battle, no blame will be attributed to you."¹⁰

As a further metaphysical foundation, God sheds light on the difference between what is absolute spirituality—and as such indestructible—and what, as a corporeal and human element, has only an illusory existence. On the one hand, the metaphysical unreality of what can be lost as passing life and mortal body—or whose loss can be conditioning for others—is revealed. On the other hand, Arjuna is led to the experience of that form of manifestation of the divine, to an overwhelming power in an irresistible absoluteness. Faced with the greatness of this force, every conditioned form of existence appears as negation. Where this negation is actively negated, that is, where every conditioned form of existence is overwhelmed or destroyed in the assault, this force comes to terrifying manifestation. On this basis, one can accurately grasp the energy that is capable of bringing about the heroic transformation of the individual. To the extent that he is able to operate in the purity and absoluteness already indicated, the warrior breaks the chains of humanity, evokes the divine as a metaphysical force, draws this active force upon himself, and finds in it his enlightenment and liberation. The corresponding slogan of another text—belonging to the same tradition—sounds like this: “Life is like a bow; the soul is like an arrow; the absolute spirit is like a target to be pierced. Unite with this spirit, as the arrow shot pierces its target.”¹

If we can see here the highest form of spiritual realization of struggle and heroism, then it is truly significant that this teaching is presented in the Bhagavad-gita as belonging to a primordial Aryan-solar heritage. In fact, it was imparted by the “Sun” to the first lawgiver of the Aryans, Manu, and subsequently preserved by a dynasty of sacred kings. Over the centuries, this teaching was

lost and therefore revealed again by the deity, not to a priest, but to a representative of the warrior nobility, Arjuna.

What we have discussed so far also allows us to understand the innermost meanings underlying another group of classical and Nordic traditions. As a point of reference, we must take the observation that in these traditions certain precise symbolic images appear with remarkable frequency: these are the image of the soul as a demon, double, genius, and the like; the image of Dionysian presences and the goddess of death; and finally, the image of a goddess of victory, who often also appears in the form of a goddess of battle.

For a precise understanding of these relationships, it is first necessary to clarify the meaning of the soul understood as a demon, genius, or double. Ancient man symbolized in the demon or double a force lying deep within, which is, so to speak, the life of life, in that it generally guides all bodily and spiritual events, which normal consciousness does not reach and which, nevertheless, greatly influence the contingent existence and destiny of the individual. A close connection was conceived between these entities and the mystical forces of race and blood. Thus, for example, the demon appears in many respects similar to the lares, the mystical entities of a lineage or progeny, of which, for example, Macrobius states: "There are gods who keep us alive—they nourish our bodies and guide our souls." It can be said that between the daemon and normal consciousness there is a relationship similar to that between the individualizing principle and the individualized. The former is, according to the teachings of the ancients, a super-individual force, therefore superior to birth and death. The second, i.e., the individuated principle, consciousness conditioned by the body and the external world, is

normally destined for dissolution or the ephemeral survival characteristic of shadows. In the Nordic tradition, the image of the Valkyries has more or less the same meaning as the demon. The image of the Valkyrie merges in many texts with that of the fylgja, that is, with a spiritual entity acting within man, to whose power his destiny is subject. And like the kyn-fylgja, the Valkyrie is—similar to the Roman lares—the mystical force of blood. The same applies to the fravashi of the Aryan-Iranian tradition. The fravashi, explains a well-known Orientalist, “is the intimate force of every human being, and that which sustains him and causes him to be born and to exist.” At the same time, the fravashi, like the Roman lares, are in contact with the primordial forces of a lineage and are—like the Valkyries—terrifying goddesses of war who grant fortune and victory.

This is the first connection we have to discover. What could this mysterious force, which represents the deep soul of the race and the transcendental in the realm of the individual, have in common with the goddesses of war? To understand this point, we must remember that the ancient Indo-Germans had a somewhat aristocratic and differentiated conception of immortality. Not everyone escapes self-dissolution, that lemurian survival of which Hades and Niflheim were ancient symbolic images. Immortality is a privilege of the few and, according to the Aryan conception, mainly a heroic privilege. To survive—and not as a shadow, but as a demigod—is reserved only for those whom a particular spiritual action has elevated from one to the other nature. Unfortunately, we cannot adduce all the evidence here to justify the following statement: technically, this spiritual action consisted in transforming the individual ego from normal human consciousness, which is circumscribed and individuated, into a

profound, super-individual, individuating force that is beyond birth and death and to which we have said the concept of “demon” corresponds¹³.

Moreover, the daemon is beyond all finite forms in which it manifests itself — not only because it represents the primordial force of an entire lineage, but also in terms of intensity. The abrupt transition from ordinary consciousness to the force symbolized by the demon consequently gave rise to a destructive crisis: like lightning, following an excessively high potential in the human circuit. Let us therefore assume that, under entirely exceptional conditions, the demon can still burst into the individual and thus make him experience a destructive transcendence: in this case, a kind of active experience of death would be aroused. The second connection then becomes clear, namely why the image of the double or the demon in ancient myths could merge with the divinity of death. In the Norse tradition, the warrior sees his Valkyrie precisely at the moment of death or mortal danger.

Let us continue. In religious asceticism, mortification, renunciation of the self, and tension in abandonment to God are the preferred means by which one seeks to provoke the aforementioned crisis and overcome it positively. Everyone is familiar with expressions such as “mystical death” or “dark night of the soul,” etc., which indicate this condition. In contrast, in the context of a heroic tradition, the path to the same goal is represented by active tension, by the Dionysian liberation of the element of action. At the lowest level of the corresponding phenomenology, we see, for example, dance, used as a sacred technique to evoke and induce, through the ecstasy of the soul, forces lying deep within. In the life of the individual liberated to

the Dionysian rhythm, another life emerges, almost like the emergence of its root. “Wild host,” Furies, Erinyes, and other similar spiritual entities dramatize this force in symbolic terms. They therefore correspond to a manifestation of the demon in its terrifying and active transcendence. On a higher level are the sacred war games. Even higher is war. We are thus brought back to the primordial concept of battle and warrior asceticism.

At the height of the danger of heroic combat, the possibility of such a supernormal experience was recognized. The Latin expression “*ludere*” (to play, to fight) already seems to contain the idea of resolving¹⁴. This is one of the many allusions to the property inherent in combat of freeing oneself from individual limitations and bringing out free forces hidden deep within. From this derives the basis of the third assimilation: demons, lares, and the individuating ego are identical not only to the Furies, Erinyes, and other unleashed Dionysian natures, which in turn have many traits in common with the goddesses of death; they also take on the same meaning with regard to the virgins who lead the assault in battle, the Valkyries, and the *fravashi*. The *fravashi* are referred to in the texts, for example, as “the terrifying, the omnipotent”, “those who listen and grant victory to those who invoke them” — or, rather, to those who evoke them within themselves.

From here, it is a short step to the final similarity. The same warrior entities ultimately take on the traits of goddesses of victory in Aryan traditions, a metamorphosis that characterizes the happy fulfillment of the inner experiences in question. Just as the demon or the double signifies a profound and super-individual power in its latent state with respect to ordinary consciousness, just as the Furies and the Erinyes reflect a special

manifestation of demonic unleashing and irruptions—and goddesses of death, Valkyries, fravashi, etc., refer to the same situations, insofar as these are made possible through heroic combat—so the goddess of Victory is the expression of the triumph of the ego over this power. She marks the victorious tension towards a condition situated beyond the danger lurking in ecstasy and in forms of subpersonal destruction, a danger always lurking behind the frenetic moment of Dionysian and heroic action. The impulse toward a spiritual state, truly superpersonal, which makes one free, immortal, inwardly indestructible, the so-called “becoming one of the two” (the two elements of human essence), is thus expressed in this representation of mythical consciousness.

Let us now turn to the dominant meaning of these primordial heroic traditions, namely the mystical conception of victory. The fundamental premise is that an effective correspondence between the physical and the metaphysical, between the visible and the invisible, was conceived where the actions of the spirit manifest super-individual traits and are expressed through real operations and facts. A spiritual realization on this basis was sensed as the secret soul of certain authentically warrior actions, whose crowning glory lies in actual victory. Then, the material aspects of military victory become an expression of the spiritual action that brought about the victory, at the point where the external and the internal connect. Victory appears as a tangible sign of a consecration to a mystical rebirth accomplished at the same point. The Furies and Death, which the warrior has materially confronted on the battlefield, also oppose him inwardly on the spiritual plane, in the form of a threatening eruption of the

primordial forces of his being. At the point where he triumphs over them, victory is his.

This picture also explains why, in the world connected with Tradition, every victory took on a sacred meaning. Thus, the army leader acclaimed on the battlefield offered the experience and presence of that mystical force that transformed him. The profound meaning of the otherworldly character emerging from the glory and “divinity” of the victor becomes understandable, as does the fact that the ancient Roman celebration of triumph took on far more sacred than military traits. The recurring symbolism in the primordial Aryan traditions of victories, Valkyries, and similar entities, which guide the soul of the warrior to “heaven,” as well as the myth of the victorious hero, such as the Doric Heracles, who obtains from Nike (the “goddess of victory”) the crown that makes him a participant in Olympic indestructibility—this symbolism now appears in a very different light. It is now clear how distorted and superficial is the view that sees in all this only “poetry,” rhetoric, and fairy tales.

Mystical theology teaches that spiritual transfiguration and sanctification are accomplished in “glory,” and Christian iconography surrounds the heads of saints and martyrs with a halo of glory. All this points to a legacy, albeit a faint one, of our highest heroic traditions. The Aryan-Iranian tradition already knew of the heavenly fire understood as glory — Hvarenó — which descends upon kings and leaders, making them immortal and bearing witness to their victory. And the ancient royal crown with rays symbolized precisely glory as solar and heavenly fire. Light, solar splendor, glory, victory, divine kingship are images that appear in the Aryan world in the closest connection, not in terms of abstractions or human inventions, but in the sense of

absolutely real forces and dominions. In this context, the mystical doctrine of struggle and victory represents for us a luminous peak of our common conception of action in the traditional sense.

This traditional conception still speaks to us today in a way that is understandable—provided, of course, that we abstract from its external manifestations, which are conditioned by time. If we want to overcome that tired, anemic spirituality based on abstract speculations or pietistic sentiments, and at the same time overcome the materialistic degeneration of action, can we find better points of reference for this task than the ideals of the primordial Aryan man mentioned above?

But there is more. Material and spiritual tensions have become so compressed in recent years in the West that they can ultimately only be resolved through combat. With today's war, an era is coming to an end, and forces are now breaking forth that can no longer be dominated and transformed into the dynamics of a new civilization by abstract ideas, universalistic premises, or irrationally conceived myths. Much more profound and essential action is now required so that, beyond the ruins of a subverted and doomed world, a new era may begin for Europe.

In this perspective, much will depend on how the individual can shape the experience of combat: whether he is able to accept heroism and sacrifice as a catharsis, as a means of liberation and inner awakening. Not only for the definitive and victorious conclusion of the events of this stormy period, but also to give form and meaning to the order that will arise from victory, this undertaking of our combatants—inner, invisible, far from any gesture or grand words—will have a decisive character. It is in the battle itself that we must awaken and temper that force which,

beyond the storms of blood and hardship, will bring about a new creation with new splendor and powerful peace.

For this reason, today we must learn anew on the battlefield the pure action, action not only in the sense of manly asceticism, but also of purification and the path to higher forms of life, valid in and of themselves — which, however, in a certain sense means a return to the primordial Aryan-Western tradition. From ancient times, the evocative slogan still echoes down to us: “Life is like a bow; the soul is like an arrow; the absolute spirit is like a target to be pierced.” Those who still live the battle in the sense of this recognition will remain standing where others will fall — and they will be an invincible force. This new man will overcome every drama, every darkness, every chaos within himself, and in the advent of the new times he will represent the beginning of a new development. According to primordial tradition, such heroism of the best can really take on an evocative function, that is, to reestablish the contact, loosened for centuries, between the world and the superworld. Then, combat will become neither a horrible carnage nor will it have the meaning of a disconsolate destiny conditioned solely by the will to power, but will be the proof of the right and mission of a people. Then peace will not mean a new drowning in the gray everyday bourgeois life, nor the loosening of the spiritual tension operating in battle, but will instead have the meaning of its fulfillment.

This is also why we want to make the profession of faith of the ancients our own again today, as expressed in the words: “The blood of heroes is more sacred than the ink of scholars and the prayers of the devout.” This is also the basis of the traditional conception that in “holy war” the primordial mystical forces of the race are at work, much more than individuals. These forces of

the origins create world empires and bring “victorious peace” to man.

Appendix – Race and War

In our previous article (No. 20 November), discussing the possibilities that war and heroic experience can offer for a reawakening of deep forces connected to the very substratum of the race, we saw that, in very general terms, two distinct, indeed opposite, cases arise: the crisis of the small, domesticated, conformist, intellectual, or empty idealistic bourgeois personality, which in the first case can result in a collapse, signifying the emergence of elementary forces and instincts, which in war bring the individual back to the pre-personal stage of the “races of nature”; races, which are exhausted in a bundle of instincts, both of preservation and of savage affirmation. In the second case, however, everything that is most “elementary” and non-human can be realized in heroic experience and becomes a means of transfiguration, elevation, and integration of the personality in a transcendent way of being, so to speak. While this evokes what we have called the “race of the spirit”, that is, the spiritual element from “above” which, in the higher races, acts formatively on the purely biological part and is at the root of their “tradition” and of their fateful greatness — simultaneously, from the point of view of the individual, there are experiences which antiquity, and specifically Aryan antiquity, considered no less rich in supernatural fruits than those of asceticism, holiness, and even initiation. Having recalled our starting point in these terms, let us specify the subjects we intend to develop further. First of all, as we announced, we want to produce a brief documentation to show that the aforementioned concept of heroism, far from being the product of our own particular speculation or an empty rhetorical projection, responds to a precise tradition recurring throughout a whole series of ancient

civilizations. Secondly, we want to develop the concept of “victory,” understood as a “mystical” value closely connected with an inner rebirth. Finally, moving on to a more concrete level, we want to see what the behavior of the various races is in general in relation to this order of ideas. In this article, we will exhaust the first point.

In general, we note that, especially for ancient humanity, every war appeared as the image of a perennial struggle between metaphysical forces: on the one hand, there was the Olympian and luminous principle, the Uranian and solar reality; on the other hand, there was brute force, the “Titanic,” telluric, “barbaric” element in the classical sense, the demonic-feminine principle of chaos. This view recurs constantly, under symbolic guise, in Hellenic mythology; in even more precise and radical terms, it is reaffirmed in the general worldview of the Iranian-Aryan races, who considered themselves directly as militia of the luminous God fighting against the power of darkness; they remained throughout the Middle Ages, often preserving classical motifs despite the new religion. Thus Frederick I of Swabia, in his struggle against the rebellious communes, evoked the symbol of Heracles and the weapon with which this symbolic hero of the Dorian-Aryan and Achæan-Aryan races fought as an ally of the “Olympian” forces and adversary of the dark creatures of chaos.

Such a general conception, deeply felt, could not fail to be reflected in the most concrete forms of life and activity, to the point of elevating them to a symbolic and, we might almost say, “ritual” significance. For our purposes, it is particularly worth noting the transformation of war into a “way of God” and a “great holy war”.

We deliberately omit here the documentation specific to Roman culture, as we will use it in the next article on the “mysticism of victory.” Instead, we will begin by referring to the well-known testimonies relating to the Nordic-Aryan tradition. In this tradition, Valhalla is the seat of immortality reserved exclusively for heroes who have fallen on the battlefield. The lord of this place, Odin-Wotan, is also presented in the Ynglingasaga as the one who, with his symbolic sacrifice on the cosmic tree Yggdrasil, showed the heroes the way to that divine abode, where they live eternally, as if on a shining peak above the clouds. According to this tradition, no sacrifice or worship is more pleasing to the supreme god than that performed by the hero who fights and falls on the battlefield. But there is more, there is a kind of metaphysical counterpart to the view outlined above: the transhuman forces of the heroes who, in falling, sacrificed themselves to Odin, would go to swell the ranks of this god in his fight against the ragna-ròkkr, that is, the destiny of “darkening of the divine” that has been hanging over the world since time immemorial. In the Edda, it is in fact said that “however great the number of heroes gathered in Valhalla, they will never be too many when the Wolf comes”. The “Wolf” here is the symbol of a dark and savage power that had previously succeeded in chaining and subjugating the race of “divine heroes,” or Aesir. The “Age of the Wolf” more or less corresponds to the “Iron Age” of classical tradition and the “Dark Age” — kali-yuga — of the Indo-Aryan tradition: symbolically, this alludes to an era of the unleashing of purely earthly and desecrated forces.

It is important to note that similar meanings remain and can be found under the external Christian guise of the medieval ideology of the Crusades. Here, the liberation of the Temple and

the conquest of the Holy Land had many more connections than one might suppose with the ancient Aryan traditions relating precisely to the mystical Asgard, conceived as a distant land of heroes where death does not reign and whose inhabitants enjoy an incorruptible life and supernatural calm. The “holy war” appeared to be an entirely spiritual war, so much so that ancient chroniclers could literally compare it to “a cleansing bath, which is almost like the fires of purgatory before death”: a clear reference to the esoteric meaning of the struggle. “What glory is there for you in not coming out of the fray covered in laurels? But what greater glory is there than to earn an immortal crown on the battlefield?” said Bernard of Clairvaux to the Crusaders, with special reference to the Templars, in his *Laude de nova militia*. The “glorie asolue,” the same glory attributed to the Lord in the heights of heaven — in *excelsis Deo* — was promised to the warrior in Provençal texts.

Furthermore, the military reverses suffered by the Crusades, which were initially a source of surprise and dismay, served to purify the very concept of war of all traces of materialism and superstitious devotion. The unfortunate fate of a crusade was compared by popes and preachers to that of an unhappy life, which would not be judged and rewarded except in terms of an otherworldly life and justice. This placed something superior to both victory and defeat and concentrated all value on the spiritual aspect of the action.

We thus approach the innermost side of the heroic experience according to its ascetic value: to identify this further, it should come as no surprise that we will now refer first of all to a tradition which, like the Islamic one, would apparently seem to be the opposite pole of the one just mentioned. The truth is that

in the Crusades, warrior races faced each other which, deep down, fought each other, finding in war the same super-material meaning. But, in addition, in the Islamic tradition, the ideas that we will now expound are essentially to be considered as the echo of an originally Persian (Aryan-Iranian) conception, later adopted by the Arab races.

In the Islamic tradition, therefore, we find the central core of the whole order of ideas discussed here, in the theory of the dual war, that is, the “small and great holy war.” The “little war” here refers to the material war waged against an enemy people and, in particular, against the unjust, the “barbarian” or the “infidel,” in which case it becomes the “little holy war,” identical to the Crusade in its outward fanatical and simply religious meaning. The “great holy war” is instead of a spiritual and internal nature: it is the struggle of man against the enemies he carries within himself, or, more precisely, the struggle of the superhuman element in man against everything that is instinctive, passionate, subject to the forces of nature. The condition for inner liberation is that such an enemy, the “infidel” and the “barbarian” within us, be defeated and bound in chains.

That being said, the essence of the tradition in question lies in conceiving the small war, that is, the concrete, armed war, as a means through which the “great holy war,” the inner war, can be realized in perfect simultaneity. For this reason, in Islam, “holy war” and “the way of God” —jihad — are terms often used as synonyms. And we read in the Koran: “Those who sacrifice their earthly life for the future life fight in the way of God (i.e., in holy war), for whoever fights in the way of God and is killed or victorious, we will give a mighty reward.” And again: “Those who are killed in the way of God will not have their works lost. God

will guide them and dispose of their souls. He will then admit them to the Paradise He has promised them and revealed to them." These last words allude to the case of actual death on the battlefield, which therefore takes on the same meaning that the expression *mors triumphalis*, or triumphal death, had in classical antiquity. But the same concept can also be taken in a symbolic sense, thinking that those who in the "little war" were able to live a "great holy war" instead of allowing themselves to be overwhelmed by the current of inferior forces aroused by the war in their being, as happens in the heroism of Remarque or Quinton (see the previous article), has in any case evoked a force capable, in principle, of enabling them to overcome the crisis of death. In other words, even without being killed, one can have experienced death, one can have won, one can have achieved the culmination of a "superlife". From a higher point of view, "Paradise" and "heaven" are, to the same extent as Valhalla, the Greek "Island of Heroes", etc., merely symbolic representations, created for the masses, representations that in reality designate transcendent states of consciousness, above life and death. The ancient Aryan tradition has the term *jivan-mukti* to indicate such a realization already achieved in the mortal body.

Let us now turn to a purely metaphysical exposition of the doctrine in question. We find it in a text of the ancient Indo-Aryan races, imbued with such a sense of heroic-spiritual reality that it is rarely found elsewhere. It is the *Bhagavad-gita*, part of the epic poem *Mahabharata*, which, to the expert eye, contains valuable material not only regarding the spirituality of the ancient Aryan races that emigrated to Asia, but also regarding the "Hyperborean" nucleus of these races which, according to the

traditional views on which our conception of race is based, must be considered the origin of all of them.

The Bhagavad-gita contains, in the form of a dialogue, the doctrine imparted by the incarnate deity Krishna to a warrior prince, Arjuna, who had turned to him at a moment when, overcome by humanitarian and sentimental scruples, he could no longer decide to take the field against the enemy. The God's judgment is categorical: he defines the pity that had prevented Arjuna from fighting as a "weak bond of the soul," "cowardice unworthy of a nobleman, which distances one from Heaven." Therefore, it is not on the basis of earthly and contingent necessities, but on divine judgment that the duty to fight is confirmed here. The promise is: "Killed, you will have paradise; victorious, you will have the earth. Therefore, rise resolutely to battle." The inner orientation necessary to transform the "little war" into the "great holy war," into death and triumphant resurrection, and to be able to come into contact, through heroic experience, with the transcendental root of one's being, is clearly stated by Krishna: "Dedicating all your actions to me (says the god) with your mind fixed on the supreme state of the Self, far from the idea of possession, freed from mental fever, fight." In equally clear terms, it is said about the "purity" of heroic action, which must be desired for its own sake, beyond any contingent motivation, any passion, any vulgar utility. The words of the text are: "Equating pleasure and pain, profit and loss, victory and defeat, armed for battle. In this way there will be no fault in your action."

But it goes even further, proceeding to a true metaphysical justification of war. We will try to explain this in the most accessible way possible. The text starts from a fundamental

distinction: that between what is, in the supreme sense, spirit in man, and as such is incorruptible and immutable, and what, as a corporeal and human element, has only an illusory existence. That being said, on the one hand, the metaphysical unreality of what can be lost or caused to be lost in a combat situation, such as a fleeting life and a mortal body, is emphasized (there is nothing painful or tragic, it is said, in what falls, what is fatally destined to fall); on the other hand, that aspect of the divine is recalled, according to which it appears as an absolute and overwhelming force. Faced with the greatness of this force (which is revealed to Arjuna in a moment of supernatural vision), every created, that is, conditioned existence appears as a “negation.” It can therefore be said that this force strikes and has a terrible revelation wherever such “negation” is actively denied, that is, in more concrete and intelligible terms, wherever an impetus overwhelms all finite life, all limitations of the small individual, either to annihilate it or to raise it up again. Moreover, the secret of “becoming,” of the fundamental restlessness and perpetual change that characterizes the world here below, is deduced precisely from the situation of beings, finite in themselves, who nevertheless obscurely participate in something infinite. Beings that, according to Christian terminology, would be called “created,” according to that of the ancient Aryan tradition, on the other hand, “conditioned,” become, transmute, disappear, precisely because within them burns a power that transcends them, a power that wants something infinitely vaster than anything they could ever want. Once the text, in various ways, has given the meaning of such a vision of life, it must to specify what fighting and heroic experience must mean for the warrior. Values are turned upside down: through death, a higher life is manifested, and destruction, for those who go beyond it, is

liberation—precisely in its most frightening aspects, heroic impetus appears as a kind of manifestation of the divine, according to the aspect already mentioned, of metaphysical force destroying the finite—in the jargon of certain modern philosophers, one would say: of the negation of “negation.” The warrior who breaks “the soft bond of the soul,” who faces the heroic adventure “with his mind fixed on the supreme state of the ego,” reaching a plane where both the “I” and the “you,” and therefore both fear for oneself and pity for others, lose all meaning, in such an event can be said to actively assume absolute divine power, to be transfigured and liberated, breaking the limitations of the mere human state of existence. “Life is like a bow; the soul is like an arrow; the target to be pierced is the supreme spirit: to unite with this spirit is like an arrow shot from a bow sticking into its target.” These are the evocative expressions contained in another text of the same tradition, the *Mārkaṇḍeya-purāṇa*. Such, in short, is the metaphysical justification of war, the sacred interpretation of heroism, the transformation of the “little war” into the “great holy war” according to the ancient Indo-Aryan tradition, which thus gives us in the most complete and direct form the intimate content also present in the formulations mentioned above.

Finally, we will mention two more points.

The first concerns the significant relationship that, in the *Bhagavad-gita*, the teaching now expounded has with tradition and race. In chapter IV, 1-3, it is said that this is the “solar” wisdom received by Manu, who, as is well known, is the most ancient “divine” legislator of the Aryan race. His laws for those Aryan tribes had the same value as the Talmud has for the Jews: they constitute the formative force of their way of life, the essence

of what is “race of the spirit” in them. Now, this primordial wisdom, which was already transmitted in direct succession, “was lost in the world over the long course of time.” It was not revealed to a priest, but to a prime warrior, Arjuna, in the terms already mentioned. Realizing this wisdom by following the path of sacred heroism and absolute action can therefore mean nothing other than restoration, reawakening, and revival of what was at the origin of the tradition, survived for centuries in the dark depths of the race, and became mechanized in the forms of the customs of the ages.

This confirms exactly the meaning we have already indicated, that war in certain conditions can have for the “race of the spirit” and its re-galvanization. Secondly, it can be noted that one of the main causes of the crisis of Western civilization lies in a paralyzing alternative, consisting on the one hand of a weak, abstract, or conventionally devotional spirituality, rich in moralistic and humanitarian appendages; on the other hand, of a paroxysmal development of everything that is action, but in a materialistic and almost barbaric sense. This situation has remote causes. Psychology teaches that inhibition often transforms energies repressed and rejected into the subconscious, causing illness and hysteria. The ancient traditions of the Aryan races were essentially attuned to the ideal of action: they were paralyzed and partly suffocated by the advent of Christianity, which, not without relation to elements derived from non-Aryan races, in its original forms essentially shifted spirituality from the domain of action to that of contemplation, devotion, and monastic asceticism. Catholicism, it is true, often tried to rebuild the broken bridge—and already here, speaking of the spirit of the Crusades, we have seen an example of this attempt. But the antithesis between non-

active spirituality and non-spiritual activity has nevertheless continued to weigh heavily on the destiny of Western man and, in recent times, it has resulted in a paroxysmal development of everything that is action in the sense already mentioned, that is, action that is materialized and devoid of any transcendent reference point, even where it leads to achievements of unquestionable greatness.

This being the case, it may seem clear to everyone how important it would be to revive, in forms appropriate to the times, the tradition of action that is once again spiritual, justified not only by the immediate needs of a given historical situation, but also by a transcendent vocation. If, in addition to the reintegration and defense of the physical race, we must proceed with the search for values capable of purifying the spiritual race of humanity from all heterogeneous elements and leading it to a regular development, we believe that a new, living understanding of teachings and ideals, such as those briefly recalled here, represents, for us, a task of the utmost importance.

Notes

1. Wildes Heer = wild host, stormy flock.
2. Gylfaginning, 38.
3. Bhagavad-gita, III, 45.
4. Koran. IV, 76.
5. Koran, XLVII, 5-6-7.
6. De Laude novae Militiae apud L. CIBRARIO, Descr. slor. ord. Cavali., v. II p 122.
7. Bhagavad-gitā. II, 2.
8. Ibid II, 37.
9. Ibid III. 30.
10. Ibid, III. 38.
11. Mārkaṇḍeya-purāṇa, XLII, 7, 8.
12. Literally: “accompanying”.
13. For a more accurate general understanding of the teachings underlying the above-mentioned conceptions of life, we refer the reader to our book “Revolt Against the Modern World” (Author's note).
14. Bruckmann, Indogerman. Forschungen, XVII, 433.

The Mystery of Race in Ancient Rome

Racialist literature has not failed to emphasize everything that shows the importance attributed to lineage, people, origin, and ancestry in ancient Romanity at that time, and has also conducted research to recover the Aryan or Nordic-Aryan element and type in Romanity and to follow its destiny.

Because of the predominant interests in modern racialism and in the very nature of its development, this research is therefore almost always focused on the basically exterior and subordinate elements: thus it remains on the level of ancient law and custom, on certain aristocratic traditions, on the direct or indirect evidence in respect to a give physical type and, somewhat less often, is conveyed in the field of the most noted and widespread certain cults and myths. It is curious that, as far as we know, it is instead almost systematically neglected a series of sources that, in regard to the higher aspects of the doctrine of race, present a special meaning and are richly documented. The reason for that is in the predominance of the prejudice—which we previously reported in this journal—precisely to consider the whole of what in Roman antiquity had a super-rational and properly traditional character as fantasies, imaginations, superstitions, and finally, as something unserious and negligible. In this way a great part of the ancient Roman world still waits to be explored and this exploration, if conducted possessing the right principles and suitable qualification, is destined to yield valuable results, not just in regards to a spiritual and religious consciousness of the forces of the race.

The lares, penates, manes, genii familiari, the archeget heroes and so on are notions well known to anyone who has made even elementary studies of ancient Roman history. But known to what degree? Also, like the equivalents of dead and mute things that are conserved in museums, like the verbal residues of a world that is felt as foreign and “dead,” as much to leave us indifferent, at least, for whatever technical and academic reasons, they are not compelled to make special studies of sources and traditions, in place of mere culture, resulting in a worthy monograph. To integrate such signs, including pulling sufficient elements from them to make us understand the meaning and fundamental truths of ancient Roman and, in general, Ario-Mediterranean, humanity is a task that, with very rare exceptions, is not at all felt. However, even by this we understand the most precise and significant racial profession of the faith of ancient Rome, not a “philosophized” profession of faith restricted to any cultured circle, but alive and active in the most original, most widespread, most revered traditions.

The notions of lares, penates, genies, heroes, etc., are in good measure interdependent. In various ways, they all refer to the ancient Roman awareness of the mystical forces of blood and race, to the lineage, considered not only in its corporeal and biological aspects, but also in its “metaphysical” and invisible aspects, but not “transcendent,” in the limited dualist meaning that has come to prevail for such terms. The single, atomic, deracinated individual does not exist. When he presumes to be a being in itself, he is deceived in the most pathetic way, because he cannot even name the last of the organic processes that condition his life and finite consciousness. The individual is part of a group, a folk, a gente. He is part of an organic unity, whose most

immediate vehicle is blood, and is extended both in space and time. This unity is not “naturalistic”; it is not determined and called to life solely through natural, biological, and physiological processes. Such processes just constitute his exterior side, the necessary but not sufficient condition. There is a “life” of life, a mystical force of blood and folk. It subsists beyond the forces of the life of the individuals that are dissolved in it at death or that are given by it through new birth: it is therefore a *vitae mortisque locus* (a place of life and death)—a place that encompasses life and death and that for that very reason stands beyond both.

To maintain a living, continuous, and deep contact with this profound force of the race is the most direct and essential form of *pietas*, religiosity, the basis and condition of every other, the principle canons of family laws are its consequences and applications, even in relation to the earth, that it itself—as the notion of the *genius loci* shows—maintains mysterious and “mystical” relations with the blood and the original strength of the people or gens that possesses it and lives there. Looking toward the origins, there is the sense of a “mystery”—there is the myth both of beings having come from above, and of men who transcended self-humanity, to loosen their life from their person and to thus constitute it as the super-individual force of a folk, of a lineage, of an ancestry that will see its origin in it. Ideally, there is a contact and a perfect match of the individual with this power, to be able to signify through it the apotheosis, i.e., the conquest of the privilege of immortality, and to confer on it the right to be considered even a “son”—in a higher sense—of the being of the lineage, if even a type of new manifestation of this being itself.

This is the essence of the mystical-racial creed of ancient Ario-Mediterranean and, particularly, Roman, humanity. The

significance that it gives to the race as spirit, beyond that of the body, is an irrefutable fact and constitutes the base of the belief of the entities indicated and of the meticulous worship that was dedicated to them. We will put forward some evidence that will also be valid to highlight further aspects of the central ideas we succinctly exposed.

According to a noted work of Macrobius (*Sat.*, III, 3) the lares for the Roman were “the gods that make us live: they nourish our body and govern our soul.” Naturally that must not be understood in an ingenuously literal way, but in reference to the mystery of the ultimate forces of our organism. As we pointed out, not one of the most important processes that are at the base of our organic and psychic-physical life depends directly on our power and is illuminated by our consciousness. Ancient man, while he was uninterested in the exterior, physical work of such processes, which are studied by modern positive sciences, instead focused all his attention on the forces that were presupposed by them and that precisely—in a higher and symbolic sense —“nourished” and “governed” our life. Macrobius’ testimony, among many others, is the most explicit in indicating that the ancient cults of lares, manes, or penates were indeed related, above all, to such forces.

These moreover were brought back to a single origin in close relation with the idea of race.

The most ancient documents of the cult of the lares give us mainly their divinity to the individual and embodies it in the *lar familiaris* (the family spirit), the sole, but ideal, father, of a given race; this word, in reality, means not that he created materially the race at its origin as the forefather, but that he is the divine

cause of its existence and duration. (Saglio, Dict. des Antiquités grècques and romaines, III.)

The *lar familiaris* was also called *familiae pater*, father or root of the family or of the gens, under this aspect identified with the *genius generis*, the *genius* (spirit) of a given lineage. Now the word *genius* was still meant more distinctly as the hidden and “divine” force that generates—*genius nominator qui me genuit*—the creator of a given race is *generis nostri parens*, the word *genius* already in itself is related to the words *geno*, *gigno*, i.e., to the idea of generating, that lies at the base of the same word *gens*, *gente* (folk): here it is still a question for the real power that acts beyond physical generation, in the union of the sexes (a *gignendo genius appellatur*, Consorino, *de die nat.* 3), through which the nuptial bed has also the name of *lectus genialis* (bed of the folk) and every offense to the sacredness of aristocratic marriage and to the lineage was considered as a crime above all in the face of the *genius* of the lineage.

The ancient writers relate *genius* not only to the *geno*, *genere* (to generate), but also to the word *gero*, so that, by being etymologically inexact it is not less significant in relations of the idea that they had of the entity in word. This reconciliation in fact brings to light the conviction that the force constituting the mystical origin of a given lineage and the matrix of every generation, remains as a “presence” in the group corresponding and by way of principle governs, directs, and sustains the life of the individuals (Hartung, *Die Religion der Römer*, I). Our language still has the word “*geniale*” (brilliant, inspired), but just to designate a rather different thing, also opposed to the most ancient conception. The “inspired” individual, as commonly meant, is more or less the one who invents, who has some “bright

ideas,” on the rebellious, disordered, individualistic basis. In the ancient conception, geniality could be conceived only as a special inspiration or inspiration that the individual enjoyed not in that way, but essentially in relation to his race and blood, to the genius, to the divine element of his gens and the tradition of the gens.

The “presence” of the genio, the lares or the penates in the group to which it corresponded, was made aware and symbolized by the fire, the sacred flame, that had to burn uninterruptedly in the center of the patristic houses, in the temple placed in the atrium, the place where the pater familias celebrated the rites and in which the various members of the domestic or aristocratic group were gathered for meals, for example, which itself had a ritualistic significance in ancient Roman and Aryan life. For example, a portion of the food was reserved for the god of the domestic fire, in order to remember the unity of life that connected the individuals to him—a unity of life and also a unity of destiny. In certain aspects, in fact, the genius, beyond being the principle that determines the fundamental traits of the individuals arising under his sign, was also conceived as the directing principle of his most important and most decisive acts, like who helps and guides him, so to speak, from behind the scenes of his finite consciousness, becoming the ultimate cause of his destiny, both good and evil, that was intended for him. In that way, this being of the ancient Roman racial cult successively gave rise to popular depictions, which however conserve very little of the original meaning: we can for example recall the undeniable relation of the genius with the popular Christian conception of the “guardian angels” or of the good and evil angels, these images that have become absolutely mythological and deprived of the

essential and concrete relation with the blood and mystical forces of the race.

The intimate connection existing between the individual and the lares, the genius, and in general with the divinity symbolized by the sacred fire of a given bloodline, and the living character, assumed to be present and acting in such a divinity, explain the peculiarities of the ancient cult. This entity of the fire appeared as the natural intermediary between the human world and the supernatural order. Starting from the idea of the unity, fulfilled in the bloodline and in the race, of the individual with a force that, as the genius or the lares, was more than physical, ancient man was convinced of the real possibility of the influence precisely in this way, on his own destiny. Special rites had to propitiate and ennoble in order to ensure that a transcendent influence was of help to his strengths and actions through the mystery of blood and race to which he belonged. A specific character of the most ancient cults of the most ancient Aryan societies was its anti-universalism. Ancient man did not turn to a God in general, a God of all men and all races, but the God of a lineage, in fact, of his gente and his family. And vice versa: only the members of the group that corresponded to them, could legitimately invoke the divinity of the domestic fire and to think that their rites were efficacious. It is easy to pronounce negative judgments and formulaic stereotypes, like that of “polytheism”; it is difficult to clarify that what, in the ancient world, that was about because the meaning of the ancient religion became almost entirely lost, in the ensuing centuries. We limit ourselves to make two points.

First of all, there is a visible hierarchy that legitimizes the ancient aristocratic-racial Aryan and Roman cult. In an army, one does not directly address the supreme leader, but rather the

hierarchy on which he immediately depends, because of the fact that he, or the individuals closest to him, were able to settle the situation, without needing to go higher up. Likewise, admitting a universal God was not a reason to exclude every intermediary and to condemn any reference to the particular mystical forces that are closer to a folk or race and connected in a concrete unity of destiny and life. Celsus even brought up the hierarchical argument against the accusation of polytheism made by the Christians by observing, by analogy, that whoever pays tribute to obedience to an authority delegated to the government of a given province implicitly pays tribute to the central government, while whoever claims to address it solely and directly, beyond being impertinent, can, in reality, be acting in an anarchic way. And it is well known that Romanity, beyond particular aristocratic cults, also recognized more general cults, parallel to the universality to which the eternal city gradually elevated itself, and also indicates on the level of entities, like the lares, or genii themselves, because there was also a national conception of the lares, for example, where they attributed a cult to the lares militares, or they spoke of the lares publici, or they referred to the mystical force of the imperial lineage, to the “demigods who founded the city and established the universal empire,” or they introduced the idea of “genius or universal demons.”

In the second place, ancient traditional man did not reduce the cult to a mere sentimental disposition for which the rite was only an empty ceremony. For those who considered the relationship between the human world and the divine as real and effective, he thought that there existed precise conditions. One of these was race and blood. Even without wishing to enter the complex field of the metaphysical presuppositions of the cult, it

appears evident that the force, to which the individual thought he owed his life, that he supposed “present” in his same body but to which he attributed super-individual and supernatural characteristics, was conceived as the most direct and positive path to return to what is highest in life. The race, as race of the spirit, was therefore a religious value, it contained a sacrament, it was hidden by “magic,” and that for considerations, one must recognize it well, in their positive and realistic mode.

The oath on the genius in Roman antiquity was made while touching the center of the forehead, and the cult of the genius itself did not lack a relation with that of the Fides, the personification of essentially Aryan and virile virtue, of fidelity and loyalty. The detail related to the gesture of the oath is, for every expert, rather interesting, because it related the genius and the entities similar to it back to mens, to the intellectual and virile principle of life, hierarchically superordinate both to the soul and to the purely corporeal forces: it cannot be by chance that the place attributed by the Roman tradition to mens – the center of the forehead – was that which in the Indo-Aryan tradition is certainly assigned the ajna chakra to the force of “transcendent virility” and to the so-called “center of command.” With that in mind, the suspicion is unlikely, that in the Roman family cult, if not exactly of superstitious personifications, was a type of “totemism,” the totem being the dark entity of the blood of a tribe of barbarians, related to the forces of the animal kingdom. We see instead that the ancient Roman world gave to the gods of the race and family group precisely some supernatural traits, the mind mens or the nous conceived in Mediterranean antiquity exactly as the supernatural and “solar” principle of man.

Certainly, we must not generalize and think that it is about that in every case. The traditions encompassed in the ancient Roman world are more varied and complex than has been supposed up to now. Both ethnically and spiritually, diverse influences met in the most ancient period of Rome. Some are actually related to inferior forms of cult – inferior either by belonging to a non-Aryan ethnic substrate, or by representing a regressive and materialized form of somewhat more ancient cults, of Aryan and particularly Atlantico-Occidental origin. That is valid also for the cult related to mystical forces of blood, race, and, family that in some cases and phases has, let us admit, “crepuscular” traits, with special regard to their inferior chthonic aspect predominantly related to that matching instead celestial and super-terrestrial symbols.

One can nevertheless not contest the idea that in the greater number of cases the highest tradition was present in Rome and that in its development Rome was able to “rectify” and purify to a not negligible measure the different traditions that it had included. So against the myths which, in reference to the cult of the lares at Acca Larentia, to the re plebeo Servio Tullio, and to the Sabine element remaining at an inferior level, we have the “heroic” elements of the cult of the lares and penates and such elements assume ever more significance in the events at the time of the Empire.

Some think that the same term “lares” comes from the Etruscan *lar*, a word that means leader or chief, that however was related to chiefs and leaders like Porsenna and Volumnio. A very widespread tradition among the ancients for which it suffices to recall Varrone, identifies the lares with the “heroes,” in the Greek sense of demigods, of men who have transcended nature and were

made participants of the indestructibility of the Olympians so that it validates, in spite of its generalization, Mommsen's idea through which every gens would have had as one of its heroes, the principle of the people that was venerated precisely in the person of the *lar familiaris*.

The supernatural and "regal" side of the ancient cult of the mystical forces of blood is emphasized with that. This is not everything. On the one hand, the funereal epigraphs attest to the Roman faith that the principle of immortality for his descendants was the *lares* themselves: many epigraphs do not indicate the negative "telluric" possibility of a type of dull and nocturnal post mortem survival in an underworld, but they affirm the higher idea that death is the principle of a superior existence. They put death exactly in relation, to which they were dedicated, with the *lares* or heroes of his people. On the other hand, as previously noted, Romanity would universalize the notion of the *lares*, extending it to the central dominating force of Romanity. We find therefore the inscriptions dedicated to the *lar victor*, the *lar martis et pacis* and finally to the *lares Augusti*. It is already in an environment in which it is not about more of the race as gens and nuclear family, but as folk and political community. Even outside the race so conceived a divine force, a mystical entity, is presented, connected to the destinies of war, victory, and triumphal peace – *lar victor*, *lar martis et pacis*—and connected finally to the "genius," to the generating principle of the leaders, the Caesars, to the *lar Augusti*.

With that we will now discuss a very different subject which is the Aryan conception of the fortune and destiny of the leaders, the city, and nations. For now, we believe we have brought sufficiently to light the meaning of the mythical figurations and

cults typical of the ancient Roman peoples, where unequivocally the consciousness of blood and race resided and where religiosity was not a factor of evasion and universalism, but constituted the most solid cement of the unity of folk and bloodlines. The mystery of blood was a central idea of ancient Roman spirituality and to disregard it means to be condemned to a superficial and profane understanding of the most tangible, noted, and celebrated aspects of the law, custom and ethics of ancient society.

On “Regnum” and the Spirituality of Caesar

Precisely because the subject is, as they say, in vogue in Italy today, few of the numerous new works dedicated to Julius Caesar are of any real value. In such circumstances, most are inclined to treat this or similar subjects more for reasons of convenience and almost opportunism than out of a spontaneous interest, felt and supported by serious preparation and understanding.

Another of the shortcomings of most modern works on Caesar stems from the application of an exclusively “humanist” point of view. The so-called “cult of personality,” the concentration of all interest on the simply “human” side of the great figures of the ancient world, almost taking as a principle for their understanding the type of the Renaissance “condottiero”—all this constitutes a prejudice that is indeed limiting, if not downright contaminating. Caesar is among those who suffer most from this, precisely because some of his traits lend themselves particularly to striking the imagination of those who are already inclined to do so, while other characteristics, super-personal and, we might say, “fateful,” are overshadowed. The formula “Personalities make history” is as true when placed in its proper context and contrasted with a deterministic view of a lesser, materialistic or sociological nature, as it is dangerous when taken further, to the point of precluding the penetration of that aspect of great historical figures according to which they appear to us, if not as instruments, at least as elements in a higher order, in a development which, like that of all greatness, cannot be explained by purely human factors. A consideration of the figure of Julius Caesar that starts from this point of view, distancing itself from

the usual “humanistic,” political-military, and literary evaluation, would indeed be highly desirable in the new Italian cultural climate.

These reflections came to mind when reading a new work on Caesar by Giovanni Costa. We cannot provide a “review” of the book here, as this would be rather trivial. As a direct reference to it, we will therefore limit ourselves to saying that it is a clear, balanced, concise and accessible account of the life and work of Caesar, an account that is, however, somewhat marred by a certain rationalist *forma mentis* on the part of the author, who is constantly anxious to go beyond what the so-called “positive” data can establish and to make adequate use of everything that, as tradition and myth, can be dismissed as lacking historical truth in the vulgar sense, precisely because of this it rises to the value of certain testimony for meanings of a higher order, which alone are capable of introducing us to the inner, and therefore more essential, side of a given reality. In this way, this new work, if it is free from rhetorical embellishments, “letter-izing,” and ostentatious apologies, if it appears dignified and testifying to the thoughtfulness of a “scholar,” does not itself escape, with regard to Caesar, the aforementioned “humanism”, which sometimes intertwines with a vein of skepticism, somewhat diminishing its stature.

Yet the book opens with an approach that suggests that the author has immediately taken the right path, that Costa has succeeded in grasping the central point that would allow us to order the essential features of Caesar's character, actions, and function in a reference that is not simply historical, but historical and at the same time super-historical. Costa begins with the speech that Caesar gave as a teenager at the funeral of Gaius

Marius' wife, as a descendant of the ancient, glorious, and almost legendary gens Julia. On that occasion, Caesar uttered these fateful words: "In my lineage there is the majesty of kings, who excel in power among men, and the sacrilege of the gods, who have the power of kings in their hands".

Costa sees here the emergence of a principle—both new and ancient—that already resounds like an alarming bell in the turbulent, treacherous, disintegrated, and liberalizing environment of Roman society in the last century before Christ, almost a prelude to the work of the future ruler. But already in the reference to that formula *Paspet* to the simple imperator — which in the language of the time designated the mere military leader — is already outdated and an evident and meaningful connection is established with a traditional and primordial idea, already embodied in some aspects of the ancient Rome of the Kings, but, beyond that, universal, because it can be found, in one form or another, in a typical cycle that encompasses the greatest hierarchical-spiritual civilizations of the pre-antique world. This idea is already that of the *sacrum imperium*, of the *regnum* that justifies itself as an institution that is not only temporal, but temporal and at the same time sustained and made transcendent by a force or influence from above. But Costa seems to have been afraid to touch on this point, which is ripe for a higher interpretation, so that we immediately see him intent on diminishing its significance, above all because he is unable to connect Caesar's idea with anything other than supposed "Hellenic-Asian reminiscences," and then burning abundant grains of incense to positivist prejudices about the "fables," "stories," and "amusing adventures" that are supposed to be the

symbolic ancient traditions about the super-historical origins of Rome.

In this way, Costa set out to do the opposite of what, from our point of view; that is, to consider Caesar in terms of a fatal, super-personal fulfillment of the idea of the *Regnum*, which initially revealed itself instinctively and almost unconsciously in a moment of eloquence on the part of the young patrician, and later acted as an objective force of destiny through “humanity” and military action of Caesar, finally becoming conscious of itself and conscious of the “perpetual dictator” in the new Roman constitution. However, it is extremely significant that, despite his intentions, Costa arrived more or less at the same point. He describes Caesar as a kind of positivist anticlerical *avant la lettre*, who nevertheless, through the affirmation of his powerful personality, ends up believing in something more than this simple human personality: certainly not in external deities or in Syrian-Semitic “redeemers,” but in a mystical, mysterious force of luck and victory—*felicitas Caesaris*, *fortuna Caesaris*—which gradually became evident to him as the hidden soul or subterranean source of everything that was being created through him in the visible world. Such a force, in its personification as *Venus Victrix* and *Venus Genitrix*, was placed by Caesar in the closest connection with the primordial generative force of his own lineage: which means that it appeared to him in connection with the same principle to which the young Caesar had referred when he proclaimed the aforementioned doctrine of the *Regnum*, and almost as the concrete effectiveness of this principle in Romanity and in the world. Moreover, if Costa discovers a unity of intent and will behind the variety—often contradictory, if not Machiavellian and opportunistic, yet constantly subordinate to a

formula: the dignity of Caesar himself and the dignity of the Roman people—of the means or immediate ends chosen by Caesar in the various phases of his rise, then the same motif can be discerned here, namely: the parallelism of two series, one dominated by the “person” and the other by a higher principle, from which the “person” element is, so to speak, “acted upon” in a preliminary phase, but in which it is ultimately transfigured and centered.

To say that Caesar, who “is not a believer, not only in the formalistic sense of the Romans, but not even in the broad religious sense that moderns might recognize in him,” and who also dispenses with devout or speculative hypotheses about the immortality of the soul, almost through a sensation, gave new life to the “ancient primitive idea of Roman Fortune” a cosmic and impersonal element, “the sole actress, especially in matters of war,” and that this was “the only conception which, once formed in him, had such a tenacious hold on him that in the last period of his life one may doubt whether he had so transfused it into himself and so confused it with his own fate that he considered himself, as many believed him to be, “divine”. In Caesar, however, this is combined with the personal element that we usually find in all men of genius, who feel the daemionium feverishly stirring within them, to the point of objecting to it and making it the reason for a kind of exaltation from which they necessarily draw energy and faith for the accomplishment of their own work. Therefore, with the progress of his fortune in war, one could follow the maturing and fulfillment of this conception of his (of fortune Caesaris)... as a belief and an explanation that gradually seems to be abstracted from Caesar's person and events, so that both he and his contemporaries saw something inexplicable in

which they believed the aura of the numinous to pass—to say all this is to note, albeit through reticence and hesitation and with the usual limitations and pseudo-psychological and empirical explanations that are de rigueur among modern historians and “researchers,” precisely the element of “fatefulness” mentioned above, which we do not understand as a generic sensation, but understood in connection with the very principle of the *Regnum*, in the act of giving shape to a new universal civilization through Roman power.

Caesar is the one who, in reference to a figure who was certainly not of the first rank, such as Cicero, could say that it was a greater glory to extend the boundaries of the spiritual empire than that of any conqueror, expander of the material empire—and Caesar is at the same time the one who in his style has nothing mystical or vague, whose essentiality and lucidity more than that of a “spiritualist” or a man of letters, is that of a scientist or a man of action. Caesar is the man who harbors a revolutionary indifference to omens and sacrifices — and he is the man who, at the same time, from the affirmation of his personality directly translated into terms of objective and victorious action, grasps, as has been said, in contrast to an external and priestly fatalism, the sensation of a fatalism of a higher and immanent nature, overshadowed by the strength of his origins. Those who understand these elements in a synthesis come closer to the secret of Caesar's character and, through him, to that of the “Western hero” par excellence.

In such a “hero” there is something “Doric” in terms of personality, clarity, essentiality, action—but all this is not exhausted in the “humanistic,” in the purely profane. Already Greek civilization recognized its heroic ideal neither in the tyrant

drawing his power from the obscure substance of the demos or from ephemeral personal prestige, nor in the “titanic” and “Promethean” type, but rather in the type of the victor symbolically allied with the “Olympians” — in Heracles. Such an ideal can place itself beyond both the “mystical” and the priestly in the strict sense, and reach, in its own specific way, a higher plane, a certain transcendence and fatefulness, through the point where, according to the formula already used, the extreme limit of being “personality” becomes one with Tesser rather than personality.

The principle of the regnum, which through Caesar created, so to speak, the elementary physical-political and psychological-social conditions for its incarnation and universal affirmation, syncopated by the tragic end of the great Emperor, had to reaffirm itself and unfold also in a directly spiritual sphere through a veritable reform of the Roman cult with Caesar Augustus. Here we cannot develop considerations aimed at establishing the secret ideal continuity that runs between these two figures of Romanity: a continuity that is usually not understood precisely because in Caesar only the aspect of the dictator and military leader, or imperator, is usually emphasized in a distorted way. This would therefore be one of the most fascinating subjects for those with the right mindset and doctrinal preparation to deal with it: precisely in accordance with the principle of the regnum, the “eternity” of the Roman Empire would come to light, not in the terms of a glorifying saying, but in reference to an idea that, rather than historical — that is, arising from the contingent and the perishable — is “metaphysical” and, as such, endowed with perennial life and the

dignity of “always and everywhere” in the face of a fundamental meaning of civilization as virile spirituality.

Pagan Spirituality in the Heart of the Catholic Middle Ages

I. Introduction

Anyone who has had the opportunity to read our articles regularly, especially those published on various occasions in *Vita Nuova*, is already familiar with the starting point that will be the guiding thread of the present notes: we will refer to the idea of a fundamental opposition between two different attitudes of the spirit, in which we must see the origin of two traditions that are clearly differentiated, both on the historical and supra-historical plane.

The first is the warrior and royal attitude, the second the religious and priestly attitude. One constitutes the virile pole, the other the feminine pole of the spirit. One has as its symbol the Sun, “triumph,” corresponding to the ideal of a spirituality whose watchwords are victory, strength, and organizing power, affecting all activities and all individuals within an organism that is simultaneously temporal and supratemporal (the sacred ideal of *Imperium*), affirming the preeminence of all that is difference and hierarchy. The other attitude has as its symbol the Moon, like the moon, it receives light and authority from another, refers to another, and conveys a reductive dualism, an incompatibility between spirit and power, but also a distrust and contempt for all forms of superior and virile affirmation of personality: what characterizes it is the pathos of equality, of “fear of God,” of “sin,” and of “redemption.”

What history—up to the present day—has shown us about the opposition between religious authority and “temporal” power is nothing but an echo, a late and materialized form, into which a conflict has degenerated that, from the beginning, has referred to these two terms, that is, a conflict between two authorities, equally spiritual, between two currents referring with the same title, albeit in opposite ways, to the supramundane.

There is more: the “religious” attitude, far from corresponding simply to the spiritual and exhausting what emanates from the supreme domain of the spirit, is nothing more than a relatively recent product of degenerative processes that have affected an older and more primordial spiritual tradition, of a precisely “solar” type. Indeed, if we examine the institutions of the greatest traditional civilizations—from China to ancient Rome, from Egypt to Iran, from pre-Columbian Peru to the old Nordic-Scandinavian world—we constantly find, under uniform features, the idea of an absolute fusion of the two powers, the real and the spiritual; with regard to hierarchy, we find not a church, but a “divine kingship,” not the ideal of the saint, but that of one who, by his very superior nature, by the imprecatory force of the rite as a “divine technique,” plays, in relation to the spiritual powers (or “divinities”), the same virile and dominating role as a military leader before his men. It is a process of spiritual emasculation which, from this point on, has led to the religious form, then—by constantly increasing the distance between man and God, and the servitude of the former to the latter for the exclusive benefit of the priestly caste—has ended up undermining traditional unity, giving rise to the double antithesis of an anti-virile spirituality (priesthood) and a material virility (secularization of the idea of the State and of Kingship, materialization of the

ancient and sacred aristocracies). If the luminous forms of the ancient “solar” civilizations are due to the Aryan branches, in the West, the triumph of the religious spirit must be attributed above all to the Levantine element, from the Asianization of the Greco-Latin world to the decline of the Augustan imperial idea and the very arrival of Christianity. In the present notes, we propose to clarify some little-known aspects of medieval civilization in order to demonstrate that it included the attempt (both visible and hidden) at a great reaction, the will to reconstruct a universal tradition whose goal, despite formal appearances and the common conception of the Middle Ages as a “Catholic” age par excellence, is anti-Christian or, rather, transcends Christianity.

II. The Northern-Aryan Awakening of Romanity

It is universally recognized that this desire for restoration most likely originated with the Northern-Byzantine races.

In the most ancient testimonies—including, from a certain point of view, the indications of Tacitus himself—these races appeared as a type extremely close to the Achaeans, the Paleo-Aranians, the Paleo-Romans, and, in general, the Nordic-Aryans, who had been preserved, so to speak, in a state of “prehistoric” purity.

And the fact that, because of their superior, rough, unadorned, coarse features and harshly sculpted existence and customs, these races may have appeared “barbaric” to a civilization that, on the one hand, had degenerated under the weight of legal and administrative structures and, on the other, had softened in its pursuit of hedonistic, literary, and civic refinement, which were almost synonymous with decadence, this contrast could hardly prevent these races from conveying and harboring in their myths and legends the profound spirituality of an original Aryan tradition, whose foundation was an existence imbued with warlike and virile relationships, freedom, honor, and fidelity.

On the other hand, we note that it was not the “religious” spirit, but rather the “heroic” spirit, emanating from the incarnations of the principal deities, that these races originally knew and venerated.

It is the pantheon of the Aesir, in perpetual struggle against the “giants” and the elemental forces of the earth; it is Donar-Thor, destroyer of Thyr and Hymir, the “strongest of the strong,”

the “irresistible,” the owner of the “shield against terror”; it is Odin-Wotan, the giver of victory, the holder of wisdom, the host of the immortal heroes whom the Valkyries chose on the battlefields to be their own sons—the Lord of the stormy battalions, whose symbol is identical to that of Roman greatness and “glory”—hvareno Iran—the Eagle, whose strength feeds the non-human blood of the royal dynasties. Furthermore, already mixed with men, we have heroic races, such as that of the Wälsungs, to which Sigmund and Sigurd belong, against the darkening of the gods, symbols of the dark ages that will be the destiny of future generations; we have the royal Gothic races that are considered âmals, the “pure ones” or “celestials,” who trace their origins back to the symbolic Mitgarhaz, the “middle earth,” located—like the Hyperborea of the solar Apollo and the Airymen-vaêjo of the Aranas—in the far north; we have a variety of other themes and myths of very ancient Aryan origin, equally and always imbued with warrior spirituality and alien to any “religious” relaxation.

If, from the outside, the irruption of the “barbarians” may have seemed destructive because of their contribution to the collapse of the material order of the Asianized Roman Empire, from the inside, on the contrary, it meant a vivifying contribution of the Aryan spirit, a new galvanizing contact with a force still in its pure state, which was to give rise to a struggle and a reaction under the sign, of this very Romanitas and Imperium, which had drawn its greatness in the ancient world from its conformity with a virile and solar type of spirituality. After the first centuries of our era, the invaders became aware of a mission of restoration. Their “conversion” left their ethos and their intimate original tradition almost intact, which, once they had adopted the symbol

of ancient Rome, was to be directed against the usurpation and hegemonic will of the Church, while at the same time they undertook the spiritual and material formation of a new European civilization. We know that already at the time of the coronation of the king of the Franks, which took place on the day considered by Antiquity to be the rebirth of the invincible sun god (*Natalis solis invicti*), the formula *Renovatio Romano Imperii* was adopted. After the Franks, it was precisely the Germans who took on this role in an even clearer manner. The designation of their ecumenical imperial ideal was not “Teutonic” but “Roman”; even in the most distant lands, they carried Roman insignia and mottos; *basilei* and *augusti*, their kings appropriated the title of *Romanorum Reges*, and Rome always remained the symbolic source of their *Imperium* and their legitimacy.

Like recognizes like. Like awakens and integrates like. The paleo-Nordic eagle of Odin is renewed with the Roman eagle of the legions and the Capitoline god. The ancient spirit is reborn in new forms. A great current is created that is both formative and unifying. The Church, on the one hand, allows itself to be dominated—its own Christianity “Romanized”—in order to dominate in turn, to remain on the crest of the wave; and, on the other hand, it resists, wants to come to power, to rule over the Empire. If it is in tension that the clearest meanings are revealed, it is no less true that if the Middle Ages appear to us as a great “traditional” civilization in its most perfect expression, this is not thanks to Christianity, but in spite of Christianity, by virtue of the Nordic contribution that was one with the ancient idea of pagan Rome, and determines a force acting in two directions: on the political and ethical plane, through the feudal system, chivalric ethics, and the Ghibelline ideal; and on the spiritual

plane in a hidden way in the “internal” aspect of chivalry and even the Crusades, through the pagan myth that gathered around the imperial idea, through hidden veins of a tradition that would lead to Dante and the *Fideli de Amo*.

III. The Pagan Ethos of Feudalism

It is obviously necessary to dwell on the anti-Christian character of the social regime and ethical ideals of the Middle Ages, as these are things known to all, with features that are all too obvious.

The feudal regime characterized medieval society. This regime arose directly from the Nordic-Aryan world; it was based on two principles: free individuality and warrior loyalty, and nothing was more foreign to it than the Christian pathos of “sociality,” of collectivity, of love. Here, the individual comes before the group.

The highest value, the true measure of nobility, since the most ancient Nordic tradition (as in the Paleo-Roman tradition), lay in the fact of being free. Distance, personality, and individual courage were elements absolutely linked to every expression of life. The state, in its temporal political aspect—as in the ancient Roman aristocratic concept—was summed up in the council of chiefs, each of whom remained free and absolute lord of his land, pater dux and priest of his own gens. From this council, the state imposed itself as a supra-political idea through the king, since in the ancient Nordic tradition, the king was king only because of his “divine” blood, because he was ultimately nothing more than an avatar of Odin-Wotan himself. But in the case of a common enterprise of defense or conquest, a new condition superimposed itself on the other: a rigid hierarchy formed spontaneously, and a new principle of loyalty and warrior discipline asserted itself. A leader—dux or heretigo—was elected, and the free lord then became a vassal of a leader whose authority extended to the right to kill him if he failed to fulfill the duties he had accepted. At the end of the enterprise, however, the normal, previous state of

independence and free individuality was restored. The development that led from this Paleo-Nordic constitution to the feudal system can be characterized above all by an identification of the sacred idea of the king with the military idea of the temporal chief. The king embodies the unity of the group, even in times of peace, by reinforcing and extending to civilian life the warrior principle of fides or loyalty. Around the king, a court of “companions”—fideles—forms, who are free but find in the ideal of loyalty, in service to their lord, in the very fact of fighting for his honor and glory, a privilege and the realization of a higher way of being than that which, in essence, corresponds to them in themselves.

The feudal constitution was developed through the progressive application of this principle. Outwardly, it seemed to alter the ancient Aryan constitution: land ownership, which was absolute and individual in origin, now appeared to be conditional; it was a beneficium that implied loyalty and service. However, it did not alter it in depth except where fidelity ceased to be conceived as a means of achieving true freedom in a higher, supra-individual form. Be that as it may, the feudal regime was a principle and not a petrified reality; it was the generic idea of a law of direct organization that left the field open to the dynamism of forces, themselves free, aligned one under the other or one alongside the other, without compromise and without alteration—vassal versus sovereign and lord versus lord—in such a way that everything—freedom, glory, honor, destiny—could rest on courage and on the personality factor, and not—or only minimally—on a collective element or on a “public” power. Here it can be said that the king himself could lose and regain his prerogatives at any time.

Probably, man has never been treated in a more severe and insolent manner, and yet this regime was a school of independence and virility, not of servitude; in this context, the relationships of loyalty and honor were able to offer a character of purity and absoluteness that would never be achieved again.

At this point, there is no need to dwell at length on how this constitution, which was characteristic of the spirit of the Middle Ages, had little in common with the Judeo-Christian social ideal. On the contrary, it saw the reappearance of that *fides* which, before becoming the German *treue*, was the *fides* of the Romans; the object of one of the most ancient cults, it prompted

Titus Livius to say that it characterized the Roman in the most emphatic way from the “barbarian,” and it refers us to the ideal of the *bhakti* of the Aryans of India, recalling above all the pagan ethos that animates Iranian societies; if, together with the principle of authority and fidelity even to the point of sacrifice (not only in action but also in thought) directed toward deified sovereigns, the principle of fraternity was also affirmed, the latter remaining totally foreign to the feminine and communistic sentimentality introduced by Christianity. Virile qualities, even at the level of initiation (cf. Mithraism), had a higher value than compassion and meekness, so that such brotherhood—similar to that of the peers and free men of the Middle Ages—was loyal, clear, strongly individualized, and, we might even add, Roman, which could exist among warriors united by a common enterprise.

IV. The Secret Tradition of the Empire

The fides that cemented particular feudal units by virtue of a kind of purification, of sublimation into the timeless, gave rise to a higher fides, which referred to a higher, universal, and metapolitical entity, represented, as we know, by the Empire. -especially as ideally affirmed by the Hohenstaufen dynasty- is presented as a unity of a nature as spiritual and ecumenical as the Church.

Like the Church, the Empire claims a supernatural origin and purpose and offers itself as a path to “salvation” for mankind. But although two suns cannot coexist in the same planetary system (and this Empire-Church duality was frequently represented by the image of two suns), the conflict between these two universal powers, the culminating points of the great *orderatio ad unum* of the feudal world, was bound to erupt.

The meaning of this conflict is fatally lost on those who, dwelling on outward appearances and on everything that, from a deeper point of view, is nothing more than a mere fortuitous cause, see only political competition, a brutal clash of pride and hegemonic wills, whereas it was in fact a struggle that was both material and spiritual, due to the clash of two opposing traditions and attitudes that we mentioned at the beginning of this text. The universal “religious” ideal of the Church was opposed by the imperial ideal as a hidden desire to rebuild the unity of two powers, the real and the spiritual, the sacred and the virile. In terms of its external expressions, the imperial idea is often limited to claiming nothing more than dominion over the corpus and the *ordo* of Christianity. But it is clear that the imperial idea itself ultimately reflects the Nordic-Aryan and pagan idea of divine

kingship, which, preserved by the “barbarians,” came into contact with the symbols of ancient Roman civilization and, in the process, transcended the limits of a specific race, that is, of the traditions of the particular Nordic races, becoming universalized and rising up against the Church as an ecumenical reality as true as the Church itself and as the most authentic soul, the most suitable center of union and sublimation for this pagan warrior and feudal ethos, which already transcended the particular and simply political forms of life at that time.

The very claim of the Church and the anti-imperial ideology that was imposed on it confirm this character of the struggle. The Gregorian idea is an anti-traditional idea par excellence: it is that of the duality of powers and of an anti-virile spirituality that asserts itself as superior to a warrior virility that it seeks to belittle to a completely material and political level: it is the idea of the sovereign clergy dominating above the head of a State conceived as a purely temporal power, and consequently above a “layman” who derives his authority solely from natural law and receives the Imperium as if it were a beneficium granted by the priestly caste.

Naturally, this can only be a new, prevaricating, and subversive claim. Without referring to the great pre-Christian traditions, in the Church of this “converted” empire that was the Byzantine period, not only were the bishops dependent on the State, without the councils referring to the authority of the princes to sanction and definitively approve their decisions, including those relating to dogma, but the consecration of kings could not be distinguished in any essential way from that of priests.

It should be noted that, although kings and emperors, from the Frankish period onwards, undertook to defend the Church, this was far from implying “subordination to the Church,” but quite the opposite. In the language of the time, “defend” had a very different meaning from that which it has acquired today. To ensure the defense of the Church was, according to the language and ideas of the time, to exercise both protection and authority over it. What was called “defense” was a true contract that implied the dependence of the protected party, subject to all the obligations that the language of the time summarized in the word *fides*.

According to the testimony of Eginhard, after the acclamations, the pontiff prostrated himself before Charles, according to the rite established in the time of the ancient emperors; and Charlemagne himself, in addition to defending the Church, claimed the right and authority to “fortify it from within according to the true faith,” while there was no shortage of statements along the same lines, such as this one: *Vos gens sancta estis atque regale estis sacerdotium* (Stephen III to the Carolingians) and also: *Melkisedh noster, merito rex atque sacerdos, complevit laicus religionis opus*.

The Guelph opposition to the Empire is thus a pure and simple revolt that takes up as its slogan the words of Gelasius I: “After Christ, no man can be both king and priest,” and tends to desacralize the idea of empire, to stifle the Nordic-Roman attempt at the “solar” reunification of the two powers and, consequently, the reconstruction of a higher authority that the Church, as a religious institution, should never have claimed for itself.

And whenever history speaks only implicitly of this higher aspiration, it is myth that does so: myth that does not oppose history here, but integrates itself into it, revealing a deeper dimension. In the Frankish period, the enigmatic symbol of Melchizedek and his royal religion is frequently applied to the king (and the phrase quoted above gives us an example): of this Melchizedek, king of Salem, priest of a religion higher than that of Abraham, who must be considered the biblical representation of the extra-biblical, pagan, and traditional idea in the higher sense of the Universal Lord (Hindu *chakravarti*), he who unites in himself in a solar form the two powers and finds the point of union between the world and the superworld. But this same meaning also reappears in the numerous legends concerning the Germanic emperors, in which the real interferes with the unreal, history with myth. In addition to Charlemagne, Frederick I and Frederick II, according to legend, never died. They received as a gift from the mysterious “Prester John”—who is none other than a medieval representation of the “Universal Lord”—the symbols of eternal life and a non-human power of victory (the skin of a salamander, living water, a golden ring). They would continue their existence on the summit of a mountain (for example, the Odenberg or the Kyffhäuser), or sometimes in an underground place. Here, too, we find symbols that we can define as universal, from a very ancient pagan tradition.

Indeed, it was on a mountain or in an underground place that the Paleo-Iranian king Yima, “the shining one, who among men is like the sun,” found refuge and would always be found; the Nordic Valhalla, seat of the deified kings and immortalized heroes, was often conceived in the form of a mountain (the mountain of the Ancestors) where, according to Buddhist

legends, the “awakened” and “free and superhuman beings” would disappear, as is often the case with the deified Greek heroes, including Alexander the Great, in some legends of the Hellenic world.

In Agarta, the Tibetan name for the residence of the “Universal Lord,” which etymologically corresponds to the Asgard of the Edda, residence of the Aesir and the primordial divine kings, it would be located in the heart of a mountain. In general, the symbolic mountains of medieval legends, such as the Hindu Mount Merhu, the Islamic Kef, the Mont Salvat of the Grail legends, and even Olympus, are nothing more than different versions of a single theme; through the symbol of “height,” they express transcendent and “celestial” spiritual states (converging with the symbolism of underground places, i.e., hidden, if one thinks of the relationship between *coelum*, sky, and *celare*, to hide), which traditionally conferred the absolute, metaphysical authority and function of the Imperium.

The legend of the emperors who never died and were hidden in a mountain confirms the fact that these figures were seen as manifestations of the eternal, in itself immortal, function of the universal spiritual realm which, according to a recurring traditional theme (cf. the Edda, the *Brahamaâna*, the Avesta, etc.), must manifest itself again on the occasion of a decisive crisis in world history. Indeed, in medieval legends, we also find the idea that the Emperors of the Holy Roman Empire will awaken on the day when the hordes of Gog and Magog—symbols of the demonism of pure collectivity—formerly locked up by Alexander the Great behind an iron wall, break out. The emperors will fight the final battle on which will depend the flowering of the “Dry Tree,” the Tree of Life and of the World, which is none other than

Dante's "stripped plant," and also the Yggdrasil of the Edda, whose death will mark the beginning of Ragna-Rökr, the obscuring of the gods.

It is therefore significant that, among the myths that highlight the relationship between the medieval imperial ideal and the traditional "solar" idea—but which also go beyond the "religious" conception of the spirit and the political and secular limitations of empire and royalty—there are some (cf. for example, the *Speculum Theologiae*) that pose opposition to the Church and Christianity to the point of giving the resurrected Emperor, who will make the Dry Tree flourish, the features of the Antichrist; naturally, not in the usual sense (since he will remain the one who fights the hordes of Gog and Magog), but probably as a symbol of a type of spirituality that cannot be reduced to that of the Church, to the point of being obscurely assimilated, in legend, to the figure of the enemy of the Christian God.

The Ghibelline ferment, the bitter struggle for imperial vindication, had not only a visible aspect but also an invisible one. Behind the political struggle lay a struggle between two opposing spiritual traditions, and at the moment when victory seemed to smile on Frederick II, popular prophecies already announced: "The Cedar of Lebanon will be cut down. There will be only one god, that is, one monarch. Woe to the clergy! If it falls, a new order will be born!"

V. The Meaning of Chivalry

Chivalry is to the Empire what the priest is to the Church. And just as the Empire saw an attempt to reconstruct the supreme unity of the two powers according to the pagan ideal, so chivalry saw an attempt to refer the type of warrior, aristocrat, and hero to an ascetic, that is, metaphysical and initiatory, plane. In the medieval political ideal, where we have pointed out a double aspect—one relating to the feudal “ethos,” the other to the internal aspect of the myth of the Empire—of irreducibility, ethics, and esotericism.

As regards the first aspect, relating to ethos, the observation is almost banal. Chivalry, having as its ideal the hero rather than the saint and the victor rather than the martyr; for whom all values were summed up in loyalty and honor rather than charity and love; seeing in laziness and shame evils worse than “sin”: unwilling to resist evil and return good for evil, but rather accustomed to punishing injustice and returning evil for evil; excluding from its ranks those who upheld the Christian principle of “Thou shalt not kill,” holding as a principle not to love the enemy but to fight him and not to show magnanimity toward him until he had been defeated; in all this, chivalry affirms, almost without alteration, a heroic-pagan and Aryan ethic in the midst of a world that was Catholic in name only.

There is more. If the “trial by arms,” the resolution of conflicts by force, considered a virtue granted by God to man to ensure the triumph of justice and truth, is the fundamental idea on which the spirit of chivalry rests and extends from feudal law to the theological plane, proposing the use of arms and “judgment by God,” even in matters of faith, such an idea also

belonged to the pagan spirit; even more directly, it referred to the mystical doctrine of "Victory," which, foreign to the dualisms of religious conceptions, united the spirit with power, transforming victory into a kind of divine consecration, the victor and the hero into beings so close to the "heavens" as a saint or an ascetic could be; while, on the contrary, it assimilated the vanquished to the guilty and almost to the sinner. The theistic sweetening in the name of which, in the Middle Ages, one wanted to see, allegorically, a personal and direct intervention of God, shows nothing of the anti-Christian background present in the customs we have just mentioned and which restores to the concept of "glory" (reduced by Christianity to the halo of saints and martyrs) its original and virile meaning, since "glory" is the Iranian *varenô*, the arr of the most recent traditions, that is, the divine fire proper to solar natures that illuminates the kings of victory with their right of transcendental order. It will be objected: has chivalry not recognized the authority of the Church? Did chivalry not undertake the Crusades in defense of Christianity? Yes, this is true, but it must be placed in its proper context, without forgetting everything else. If the chivalric world, in general, proclaims its loyalty to the Church, and also, at the same time, to the Empire, too many elements suggest that, rather than an acceptance of the Christian belief, it was a tribute similar to that paid to the various ideals and "ladies" to which the knight turned in a de-individualized way, since, for him, and in accordance with the path he had chosen, only the generic faculty of heroic sacrifice of his own happiness and life was decisive, and not the problem of faith in the specifically theological sense. In reality, the spirit of the Crusades was no different. In the ideal of the Crusades, we find again that which cannot obviously be reduced to evangelical Christianity alone, but which is easily recognizable, on the

contrary, both in the Iranian and Hindu traditions (Bhagavad-gita) and in the Koran, not to mention the classical conceptions of the *mors triumphalis* or the “holy war” as a heroic way of overcoming death and achieving immortality.

Even admitting that the Crusades were fought to liberate the land where the Galilean apostle died, we find once again a phenomenon which, by its very origin, falls within the framework of these worldviews to which the maxim belongs: “The blood of heroes is closer to God than the prayers of the devout and the ink of the wise,” which upheld Valhalla (the “palace of heroes”) as a heavenly ideal, the “island of heroes” where the blond Radamanthus reigns on the throne of the immortals—and not from the conception that, sharing the Pelagian-Southern horror of blood, had adopted the Augustinian sentence: “He who can think of war and endure it without serious pain has truly lost all sense of humanity,” and even more drastic expressions such as those of Tertullian, faithful to the gospel of “he who kills with the sword dies by the sword” and to Jesus’ command to Peter to return the sword to its sheath.

In reality, if the Crusaders could appear as Christians and be loved and sanctified by the Church, the conclusion to be drawn from all this is that the heroic, Nordic-Germanic tradition ended up prevailing over Christianity, even during the Crusades. Instead of a watering down of this tradition in Christianity, we see, on the contrary, behind the Christian forms, the restoration of the ancient spiritual virility, where the path of the sacred warrior replaces that of the saint and the devotee.

The type of sacred warrior is, in essence, the type of knight of the great medieval orders. In these orders, the ascetic idea was

combined with the Nordic ethos, and they practiced, not in the religious sense but in the heroic sense, the same vows as monks: in fortresses instead of churches. They had regular ceremonies of consecration and were sometimes even endowed with initiations in the proper sense and with enigmatic symbols proper to a higher spirituality. In this respect, the Order of the Templars was naturally one of the most significant, and even more significant was its fierce destruction at the hands of the Church and a sovereign who was an enemy of the aristocracy and already close to the modern secular type, such as Philip the Fair. It is known that among the accusations brought against the Templars was that, in the preliminary stage of their initiation, they required the neophyte to reject the symbol of the cross and to see Jesus as a false prophet whose doctrine did not lead to salvation. Another accusation referred to abominable rites, among which, it was said, was the burning of children. The sacrilegious collaboration expressly given to these supposed confessions extracted under torture, despite the clear and consistent statements by the accused that these were symbols, should not prevent us from sensing a much deeper meaning. Rejecting the cross was certainly nothing more than rejecting an inferior form of belief in the name of a superior form. The famous act of burning a newborn baby means nothing other than baptism by fire for the purpose of regeneration (this symbol can be likened to that of the salamander, which, like the immortal Phoenix, bathes in the “fire” of heroic rebirth) -which is also one of the signs that Frederick II is said to have received from “Prester John” - a rite that may also bring to mind the ritual ceremony of corpses practiced by almost all the great Aryan civilizations, and especially prescribed by Odin for those destined to enter Valhalla.

On the other hand, the symbolism of the Temple, to which the Templars had consecrated themselves, and for which most of the Crusaders fought and died in the hope of transmuting death into new life and immortality, of obtaining “absolute glory” and “conquering a bed in paradise,” is not simply reduced to being a synonym for the Church. It has rightly been said that the Temple is a more august, vast, and less conditioned term than “Church.” The Temple stands above the Church: churches can be destroyed, but the Temple remains as the symbol of the kinship of all great spiritual traditions and of the permanence of their spirit. That is why the great universal movement of the Crusades towards Jerusalem, towards the Temple in view of which Europe realized, for the first and last time, the imperial ideal of supranational unity through the rite of action and holy war, is not, in our opinion, devoid of esoteric significance. The role played by the Albigensians and the Templars, their eminently Ghibelline character, should be enough to attract attention. In reality, the movement towards Jerusalem often concealed a hidden current against the Rome of the popes, which Rome itself, without realizing it, was feeding, of which chivalry was the militia and which was to find its apotheosis in an emperor stigmatized by Gregory IX as the one “who threatens to replace the Christian faith with the ancient rites of the pagan peoples and, accused in the middle of the temple, of usurping the functions of the priesthood.”

The figure of Godfrey of Bouillon—the most significant representative of the chivalry of the Crusades, called *lux monachorum* (which brings us back to the unity of the ascetic and spiritual principle and the warrior principle characteristic of these orders)—such a figure is that of a prince who does not

accept ascending to the throne of Jerusalem until after bringing blood and fire to Rome, killing the anti-Caesar Rudolf of Rhinfeld with his own hands, and expelling the pope from the city of the Caesars.

Furthermore, the legend establishes a significant “kinship” between this king of the Crusaders and the mythical “Knight of the Swan” (the French Helias, the German Lohengrim) who, in turn, refers to pagan imperial symbols (there is even thought to be a genealogical connection with Caesar himself), solar symbols (see the etymological relationships between Helias, Helios, and Elijah) and pagan-Hyperborean (the swan that leads Helias or Lohengrin to the “heavenly seat” is the same emblematic animal that Apollo rides among the Hyperboreans and appears frequently in the paleographic traces of the prehistoric Nordic-Arctic cult). This combination of elements makes Godfrey of Bouillon yet another symbol—in relation to the Crusades themselves—giving true meaning to this secret force which, in the political struggle of the Germanic emperors and in the very triumph of Otto I, reveals nothing more than its most visible manifestation.

VI. The “Grail” and the “Lady”

Furthermore, the Temple is at the center of chivalry not only as the Temple of Jerusalem, but also as the Temple of the Grail. The Grail, in many ways, embodies the esoteric face of chivalry, but the body of legends surrounding it only evokes its secret meaning.

Already in the Christian form of this legend, the Grail, the mystical vessel with wonderful properties, which makes all earthly food unnecessary and ensures eternal youth, was transported after the Last Supper by the angels of Heaven, from where it descended only when a race of heroes capable of becoming its guardians appeared on earth. The head of this lineage had a temple built for the Grail in the image of that of Jerusalem, and instituted the Order of the Grail, composed of twelve knights called “perfect knights” and even “celestial knights.” If this mystical object, whose quest is the highest ideal of the knight—and which, from a certain point of view, embodies the ancient spiritual tradition that has been lost or become invisible (the Grail kidnapped in the “heavens”)—can be linked to the orthodoxy of Rome and the priestly tradition of the Church, if one thinks that this tradition is directly posterior to Christ, how can one explain the idea that the Grail could have disappeared, as well as the idea that it was necessary for a new race to arise, not that of priests but of heroes, of knights, in order for the Grail to return once again to earth, to its Temple? It is clear that here, once again, reference is being made to another spirituality, to something that is not found in the Church and for which the latter's tradition is of no use.

On the other hand, the legend of the Grail is nothing more than the Christian adaptation of a pre-Christian, pagan tradition.

The mystical objects of the Grail legend, the cup and the spear, are found among those that the members of the divine race of the Tuatha Da Dannan (probably called Cro-Magnon, and also the “Paleolithic Hellenes”) who took them with them when they left Avalon, “where death does not exist.” King Arthur, who is credited with founding the Order of the Knights of the Grail, is said to have resided there. The representations of the castle in which, according to ancient Celtic legend, a vessel that provided endless food (which later took the name Grail) was kept often coincide with those of the symbolic seat of the “universal king,” the palace of Prester John, the Asgard of the Edda, seat of the Aesir and founders of the Nordic royal houses, and with numerous other allegorical representations of the “place” of supreme spiritual authority, holder of the two powers. Before becoming the cup from which Jesus drank at the Last Supper, the Grail, it is ideally the magical vessel given by Llyr's son, Brân, to Marholwch, a vessel containing the power to resurrect the “dead” and heal any wound, not unrelated to numerous other vessels of the same type known in Celtic legends, which are sometimes said to have refused to give their mystical contents not to sinners but to perjurers and the lazy. But there is something even more “curious”: Numa is said to have received from “heaven” as a *pignus imperii*, a guarantee of Rome's eternity, a sacred shield corresponding to the ancient vessel intended to contain ambrosia, that is, the non-earthly food of the immortals. In pagan Roman times, the sacred shield was guarded by the college of the Salii; the latter, in addition to the shield, possessed the spear and their number was twelve, like the knights of the Grail and King Arthur, who also had in their custody a priceless object: the Grail, the cup of the immortal drink, and a spear. Here again, through underground channels, an identical symbolism resurfaces, the

same enigmatic tradition related to the forms of ancient heroic-pagan civilizations.

All this evokes in a significant way the behind-the-scenes world of chivalry and its mysteries, to use Aroux's expression. Aroux, and with him Rossetti, although the ignorance of a certain academic culture has barely glimpsed it, had already opened the way to other discoveries; they had demonstrated the existence of a coded, allegorical language in the remains and stories of chivalry, right up to Dante and those who can be called "Faithful of Love." Thanks to this language, not only was an unorthodox teaching that went beyond the limits imposed by Christianity concealed, but there was also, at times, a lively and radical aversion to the Church. This is not the place to develop this theme; moreover, in our own day, the late Luigi Valli has made a notable contribution in this regard by demonstrating the dual aspect, Ghibelline and initiatory, of a literature considered solely "poetic" in the Stil Nuovo period. We will limit ourselves to saying that anyone who thinks that the reaction against the Church, traces of which can be found in sects and secret traditions until Dante's time, was due to the corruption and decadence of the Church itself, is grossly mistaken. Here we are dealing once again with another ideal which, by its very nature, is opposed to that of the Church, corrupt or not, as the organ of Christianity, that is, of a simple religion, which it has never been able to represent. Here too, there is political opposition and, at the same time, spiritual opposition. In this regard, before concluding, it is worth mentioning the chivalric symbolism of the "Lady."

As is well known, the cult of the "lady" was characteristic of chivalry and was taken so far that, if taken literally, it may appear aberrant, as some have thought. The act of devoting oneself to a

“Lady” and pledging unconditional fidelity to her was one of the most frequent themes of the chivalric courts. The “Lady” was left to judge the value and honor of the knights and, according to the theology of the castles, there was no doubt that a knight who died for his “Lady” would share the same destiny of blessed immortality assured to the crusader who died for the liberation of the Temple. Curiously, if we consider some of the rites, we find that the “Lady” of the aspiring knight had to undress him to take him to the bath so that he could purify himself and then dress him again—like the neophytes of the pagan mysteries—in the immaculate clothes of the *Vela de Armas* (Weapon Ceremony) and finally receive his knightly investiture. We see, on the other hand, that the heroes of the sometimes scandalous adventures in which the “Lady” appears, heroes such as Tristan (Sir Tristan) and Lancelot, are simultaneously knights of King Arthur in search of the Holy Grail, that is, members of the same mystical order to which both Parsifal and Kundry, seduced in vain, and the celestial knights, such as the Hyperborean “Knight of the Swan,” belonged.

The truth is that behind all this lay deeper meanings, not intended for the judges of the Inquisition or the crude public, but symbolically intelligible under the cover of strange customs and erotic tales. In most cases, the “Lady” of the ancient chivalry must be understood in the same way as the “Lady” of the “Faithful of Love” and reveals, on the other hand, a very precise traditional symbolism. The “Lady” to whom one swears unconditional fidelity and to whom one surrenders oneself by becoming a crusader, the “Lady” who leads to purification (which the knight considers his reward and which makes him immortal when he dies for her), is ultimately equivalent to the Grail itself.

It is, as Valli has shown, for the Faithful of Love, “intelligence” in the transcendent sense, the “holy wisdom,” the personification, then, of a transfiguring spirituality and a life that ignores death; it is, so to speak, an avatar of Hebe, the eternal youth who becomes the wife of the hero Heracles, the “beautiful victor,” in the bosom of Olympus and Athena, born from the divine forehead, who serves as a guide to this hero; of Freya of the Edda, goddess of light, constantly courted by telluric beings, the Elementarwesen, who seek in vain to conquer her; of Sigrdrifa-Brynhilde, whom Wotan destines to become the earthly wife of the hero who crosses the barrier of fire (and here we find again an equivalent of the “baptism of fire” of the Templars); from the Virgin Sophia, a representation which, throughout the traditional mythical cycle of East and West, is related to the Tree of the World and of Life, the personification of the original life force, the life of life, and even power, in accordance with the double meaning of the Sanskrit term *shakti*, both wife and power. With the Tree, she is present not only in the various legends concerning the conquest of immortality or wisdom by the hero, but also, and even more significantly in our case, in those referring to the royal and priestly power of a “victor” (cf. for example, the Italian legend of the Rex Nemorensis). Was there a religious aspiration behind all this feminine and erotic symbolism? We do not believe so. Insofar as, when speaking of resurrection in the religious sense, there was obviously no danger of being accused of heresy within the framework of Christianity, the use of such a mask by the knights and the Fideles de Amor would be completely incomprehensible if this were indeed the case...

Something different and incomprehensible to the uninitiated and followers of Christianity had to be hidden: another

aspiration, irreducible to religious limits, turned toward a higher sphere; something that undoubtedly belonged to the great traditions of Aryan paganism, traditions that ignored the pathos of sin and salvation, the terrors of the afterlife and Redemption; which, instead of the “democratic” truth that transforms every mortal soul into an immortal one, recognized the double path, the double destiny, the double possibility: on the one hand, the path of the ancestors and the demons of the earth, Hades, the glacial Niflheim, the waters of dissolution and oblivion; on the other, the path of the gods—devayana—and of the heroes, the Olympian religion of the immortals, Valhalla, the waters of awakening, the “life without sleep” of the Avesta. Just as at the summit of medieval society there were the ideas of the Empire that were linked to the pagan tradition of a supreme “solar” authority, just as the symbol of the Temple and the Grail was a Christian transposition of an idea superior to religion, so too in the premises of feudal and chivalric ethics the virile and pagan type of spirituality was rediscovered, and in the Crusades and the “trial by arms,” the ancient doctrine of the *mors triumphalis* and victory. It is also possible that in the symbolism of the “Lady” and in the relationship between her and the knights of the Grail, elements specific to pagan doctrine and initiations were hidden, the themes of awakening and transition, not mystical or sentimental, but real, from one way of being to another, achieved in a virile and heroic way, far from any religious evasion and all servitude to the divine. And that the solar attitude has been maintained, according to which the element of wisdom, spiritual life, and power, to which he is devoted and “faithful” until death, must nevertheless retain feminine traits with respect to the spiritual virility of the initiate as a central value. Ultimately, the exact meaning of all this is found in the *Fieles de Amor*, behind

the even more impenetrable symbol of Hermetic-Alchemical literature, proper to the tradition which, significantly, takes the name of "Ars Regia," royal art, and recovers the themes of the initiations of the Egyptian divine royalty itself, establishing the "myth" of an "immortal and autonomous race," of the "kingless," "heirs to the wisdom of the centuries," "spouse of the Lady," and "Lords of both powers."

VII. Conclusion

All of the above constitutes only a few aspects of an extremely broad body of documentary material that could be the subject of more extensive developments, capable of demonstrating our points of view.

Civilizations and great historical epochs have a visible aspect (an Oberwelt) and a hidden aspect (Underwelt) where the most authentic meaning of the forms of external consciousness resides, without having the slightest idea of the behind-the-scenes of the subconscious and the internal processes of which these forms are but the result. A historical method that would account for the “subsoil” of history, this Unterwelt der Kultur, is only just emerging in our time, still obscured by positivist ignorance.

Applying it to the Middle Ages, we have found ourselves recognizing in this moment of history something radically different from the assumptions of those who see with nostalgia nothing more than a kind of golden age of Christianity, the most diaphanous realization of the Catholic ideal. On the contrary, we have recognized, predominant and indomitable, forces of a very different nature, forces that bore the mark of the most radiant ancient civilizations and converged toward the glorious symbol that led the great Ghibelline, Dante, to say that “Christ himself was Roman.”

The Meaning and Function of Monarchy

Part I

K. Loewenstein's essay (*La monarchia nello Stato modern*, 1969) has provided the reader with an overview of all the various forms of monarchy and the possibilities that, in his opinion, remain for a monarchical regime in the present age.

Monarchy, as we have seen, is not taken in the literal sense of the term (government of one man, power concentrated in one man) but, correctly, in its traditional and most current sense, i.e., with reference to a King.

Loewenstein's conclusions are rather pessimistic. In order to exist in our day, monarchy should resign itself to being a shadow of what it had been. It could be conceived only within a democratic framework and, properly speaking, in the form of a parliamentary constitutional monarchy. Apart from England, which would be a special case, the model offered by the monarchies of the small states of northern and western Europe — Sweden, Norway, Denmark, Belgium, Holland, Luxembourg — is what should possibly be kept in mind.

In the analysis of the range of the various arguments adopted in favor of monarchy, Loewenstein tried to be objective, but was unable always to be so. The precise aversion to every principle of true authority is quite visible in him, while an insufficient emphasis is given to the factors of an ethical and immaterial character. Now we believe that if you were forced to conceive of a monarchy only in an empty and democratized form, besides only

being possible because it concerns marginal small states, not yet involved in the dynamism of the great forces of the era, we undoubtedly might as well end the discussion in the negative.

It must be recognized, however, that pessimistic conclusions regarding monarchy appear largely justified only if you hypostatize the situation of the current world and believe that it is irreversible and destined to continue itself indefinitely. This situation is defined by a general materialism, the prevalence of base interests, the egalitarian error, the government of the masses, technocracy, and the so-called “consumer society.” Except that we are beginning to multiply the signs of a profound crisis of this world of affluence and counterfeit order. Various forms of revolt are already noticeable, for which it is not impossible that it could reach a state of tension and a breaking point, and that, especially in the face of possible liminal situations, tomorrow different forms of sensitivity may be reawakened, reactions occurring similar to those an organism is capable of when it is mortally threatened in its deepest being.

The supplanting, or to a lesser extent, of this new climate is the decisive element also for the problem of monarchy. In our opinion, it should be placed in the following terms: What meaning could monarchy have in the case that such a change in climate should take place, and in what form could it be a center for the reconstitution of a “normal” order — normal in a higher sense? Certainly, the presence of a true monarchy in a nation would have a rectifying power, but this is a vicious circle: without the premise that we mentioned, any restoration would have a contingent, not organic and, in a sense, unnatural character.

The disorder present in the political field, everything that it shows of instability, dangerously open to subversion — to Marxism and communism — substantially derives from the deficiency of a superior principle of authority and from an almost hysterical impatience for such a principle, through which certain political experiences of recent times serve at most as a convenient alibi. Speaking of a superior principle of authority, we refer to an authority that has an actual legitimacy and, in a certain way, a “transcendent” character, because without this, authority would lack any basis, it would be contingent and revocable. A truly stable center would be missing.

It is important to clearly fix this essential point, in order to differentiate the type of monarchy, which this essay deals with, from monarchy in the broad sense of power or government of one man. In fact, spurious counterfeit forms of authority are conceivable, and are even realized. Communist regimes are also based on a de facto authoritarianism that can disguise the crudest and even tyrannical forms which are the justifications that they mendaciously give. One can put the dictatorial phenomenon along the same lines if it is conceived otherwise than in relation to emergency situations as originally occurred in ancient Rome.

On the other hand, the antithesis, so often advanced between dictatorship and democracy, is relative, except that you examine the existential foundation of these two political phenomena, that is, a “state of the masses.” If the dictatorship has not purely functional and technical characteristics (an example is offered currently by the Salazar regime in Portugal), if it is based on pathos as in some recent plebiscitary and populist forms, galvanizing it is the same element activated by every democratic demagoguery. The dictator makes a bad surrogate to the monarch

with the appeal to forces that confusingly seek a foothold, a center, whatever it is, just to come to the head of chaos, disorder, situations that have become unbearable. This also explains, however, the phenomenon of possible, abrupt changes in polarity as a result of some trauma that has suspended the cohesive and driving force of the system, as in a magnetic field when the power goes out. The most perspicuous case is perhaps provided, in this respect, by the astonishing change in the collective political climate occurring in present-day Germany, after the almost frantic mass enthusiasm that had characterized the previous dictatorial period. It is significant that, on the contrary, a similar phenomenon of inversion was not produced in Germany after the First World War, because its antecedent was not a dictatorship but a traditional monarchy.

Through the “transcendence” of the principle of authority characteristic of regality, the monarchical regime constitutes the only real antithesis both to dictatorship as well as absolute democracy. We must indicate the basis of its superior right for that reason. The various forms that it may take and the ideas or symbols that can legitimize this transcendence according to the times, do not touch the essential: the essential thing is the principle. Loewenstein is right when he says that in a world desacralized by the natural sciences, in which religion itself is undermined, there can no longer be a question of the mystique of the monarchy that in other times was supported on certain theological conceptions and a certain liturgy. But if you take a look at the world of the holders of the crown at all times and in all places, the recognition of the need for a stable center can be seen as a common and constant theme, a pole, something that to be truly stable must have, in a certain way, its own principle in

itself or from above, which must not have a derived character. In this respect one can take a look, for example, at F. Wolff-Windegg's excellent work, *Die Gekrönten*. Someone rightly wrote: "A purely political royalty — it can certainly be said — has never existed." Not so long ago, the sovereignty of divine right "by the grace of God," did not imply, in its subjects, specific theological considerations; its value, so to speak, in existential terms, corresponded precisely to the need for a higher point of reference that absolutely does not happen when the king is such only through the "will of the nation" or "the people." On the other hand, only under that assumption could those dispositions, those forms of behavior and customs of a higher ethical value develop, in the subjects, in the sign of loyalty, which we will discuss shortly.

So we cannot share Loewenstein's opinion that the ideal argument in favor of monarchy is now invalidated. What he says is true, of course, namely that the decline of monarchy is due not so much to democracy as to the coming of cars and aircraft, the automobile, television — you can say, in general, the technological industrial civilization. But here we have to wonder if, in fact, we are entitled to hypostatize this civilization, we must ask ourselves to what extent man wants to accord to everything a value different from that of a set of simple, mundane means, which in "consumer society" leaves an absolute inner emptiness. Let us repeat: it is primarily a question of the "dignity" of monarchy, an esteem and a right that always and everywhere drew from a supra-individual and spiritual sphere: sacred investiture, divine right, mystical or legendary filiations and genealogies, and so on, were only imagined forms in order to express an always recognized substantial fact, namely that a political order, a truly

organic and living collective unity is only made possible where there is a stable center and an elevated principle in respect to any particular interest and the purely “physical” aspect of society, a principle independently having a corresponding intangible and legitimate authority. Therefore, in principle what Hans Blüher wrote is absolutely correct: “A king who lets his sovereign function be confirmed by the people, admitting thereby that he is accountable to the people — instead of being responsible for the people before God — such a king renounced his kingship. No infamy committed by a king — and God knows if they were not committed — destroys the mystical objective sanction of the sovereign. But a democratic election destroys it immediately.”

If in the past, the bond of fidelity that united the subject and follower with the sovereign could be treated as a sacrament — *sacramentum fidelitatis* — something that was preserved even later as the quite perceptible foundation of a special ethics, an ethic, in fact, of loyalty and honor, which could acquire a particular force in the assumption, just now indicated, of the presence of a personalized symbol. In normal times, the fact that the sovereign as an individual might not always be at the height of the principle, did not matter; his function remained unprescriptive and intangible because obedience was not to the man but to the king, and his person had value essentially as a support so that the capacity for super-individual dedication, that pride in serving freely and possibly even the readiness to sacrifice (as in the dramatic moments when a whole people rallied around their sovereign) could be awakened or propitiated, that they might constitute a way of elevation and dignification for the individual and, at the same time, the most powerful force to hold together the union of a political body and to limit in it what it

has that is anodyne and disheartened, and in recent times has taken a dangerous extent.

That everything that cannot be achieved to the same extent in another form of political regiment, is quite obvious. A president of the republic can be flattered, but no one will ever recognize in him anything but a functionary, a “bourgeois” like any other, which only extrinsically, not on the basis of an inherent legitimacy, is vested with a temporary and conditioned authority. Whoever maintains a certain subtle sensibility perceives that “being in the service of their king,” the “fight for their king” (even the fight “for their own country,” despite the romantic coloring, has in comparison something less noble, more naturalistic and collectivistic), the “representing the king,” all have a specific quality, all of which indicates instead a parodic, not to say grotesque, character when it pertains “to one’s own president.” Especially in the case of the army, high bureaucracy, and diplomacy (regardless of the nobility), this appears very obvious. The same oath, when it is not paid to a sovereign but to the republic or one or another abstraction, has something discordant and empty about it. With a democratic republic, something immaterial, but still essential and irreplaceable, is inevitably lost. The anodyne and the profane prevail. A monarchist nation that becomes a republic is, in a certain way, a “degraded” nation.

If we observed that the kind of fluidity that forms around the symbol of the Crown is quite different from what may be related to the exalted “states of the multitude,” which can arouse or favor the demagogy of a popular leader, the difference also exists with regard to any simple nationalistic mysticism. Of course, the sovereign also incarnates the nation, symbolizes its unity on a

higher plane, establishing almost, with it, a “unity of destiny.” But here we find the opposite of every Jacobin patriotism; there are none of those confused collectivizing myths that speak to the pure demos and that almost divinize it. It can be said that monarchy moderates, limits, and purifies simple nationalism; which, as it prevents any dictatorship replacing it with advantage, so it also prevents any nationalistic excess; it defends a structured, hierarchical, and balanced order. It is known that the most calamitous upheavals of recent times can be attributed mainly to unrestrained nationalism.

After what we have said, it is clear that we do not share at all the idea that monarchy at this point should be democratized, that the monarch should assume almost bourgeois features — “must come down from the august heights of the past and present himself and act in a democratic way,” as Loewenstein claimed. That would simply destroy his dignity and his *raison d’être*, as we indicated. The king of the north European countries who carries a valise, who goes shopping in the stores, who consents to letting radio or television display his well-behaved family life to the people including his tantrum-throwing children, or else the Royal House that is provided for the curiosity and gossip of the news magazines, and whatever else one thinks, might make people close to the king, including, in the end, a good-natured paternal appearance (if the father is conceived in a bland bourgeois form), all this cannot avoid damaging the very essence of the monarchy. The “Majesty” then really becomes an empty epithet of the ceremony. It has rightly been said that “the powerful who, through a badly understood sense of popularity, consents to get closer, ends up in a bad way.”

It is clear that take to take all that as firm, means going against the current. But, again, we pose an alternative: it is a question of accepting, or not, a state of fact as irreversible, thinking that only the useless vestiges of monarchy can exist. One of the elements to consider in this regard is the intolerance in our world, for distance. The success of dictatorships and other spurious political forms is due, in part, precisely to the fact that the leader is seen as “one of us,” the “Great Comrade,” and only in these terms is he accepted as a guide and obeyed. In these circumstances the concern for “popularity” and for “democratic” means is quite understandable. But that, basically, is anything but natural; we do not see why he should be subordinated when the leader, in the end, is just “one of us” when an essential distance is felt, as in the case of the true sovereign. So a “pathos of distance” — to use one of Nietzsche’s expressions — should be substituted for that of affinity, in relationships that exclude any haughty arrogance on the one hand, and every servility on the other. This is a basic point, in its existential character, for a restoration of the monarchy. Without exhuming anachronistic forms, instead of propaganda that “humanizes” the sovereign in order to captivate the masses, almost on the same line as the U.S. presidential election propaganda, one should see to what extent traits of a figure characterized by some innate superiority and dignity can have a profound activity in a suitable context. A kind of asceticism and liturgy of power could play a part here. While just these traits will enhance the prestige of the one who embodies a symbol, they should be able to exert a force of attraction on common man, even pride, in the subject. Moreover, even in fairly recent times there has been the example of Emperor Franz Joseph who, while interposing the strict ancient ceremonial between himself and his subjects, while not imitating in the least the

“democratic” kings of the small Nordic States, enjoyed a particular, not common popularity.

To sum up, the main prerequisite for a revival of monarchy, pursuant to the dignity and function which we mentioned, there remains, in our opinion, the awakening of a new sensibility for an order that is detached from the most material, and also the simply “social,” plane, and tends to everything that is honor, loyalty, and responsibility, because similar values in the monarchy have their natural center of gravity; while, in turn, the monarchy will be end up degraded, reduced to a simple formal and decorative survival when these values are not alive and active — first in an elite, in a real ruling class. They are not the same chords that the defender of the monarchical idea and of any other system must make resonate in the individual and in the community. So it is absurd to entrust the destinies of the monarchical idea to propaganda and a praxis that approximately copies the methods of the opposed party in a democratic spirit. Even today being able to ascertain the appearance of tendencies toward an authoritarian center, towards a “monarchy” in the literal sense (= monocracy) is not enough, after what we said about the profound differences which the various objectifications of the principle of unity and authority may present. The meaning of what is not allowed to be sold, bought, or usurped in the dignity and participation in political life is a decisive factor and escapes like water through their fingers for those who think only in terms of matter, of personal advantage, hedonism, functionality, and rationality. If one must no longer speak of that meaning because of the famous Marxist “meaning of history,” which is claimed to be irrevocable, we might as well set aside definitively the cause of monarchy. This would, moreover, be tantamount to profess the most bleak

pessimism in regard to what still can appeal to man of recent times.

Part II

After having considered the spiritual aspect of the problem of monarchy, it is necessary to indicate the aspects that are related on the positive, institutional, and constitutional plane. On such a plane, it will be necessary to make clear the specific function to attribute to monarchy and what differentiates a monarchical system from other systems. It is amazing that a comparable problem is almost not faced by the propaganda of the monarchists. In elections there were, even in Italy, discourses by the monarchists who blamed, more or less on the same lines of other sectors of the opposition, the dysfunctions of the republican democratic and partocratic State and the danger of communism, avoiding however indicating, in no uncertain terms and without fear, in which terms the presence of the monarchy would positively eliminate both, or, better put, in virtue of which particular prerogatives the monarchy would be for so much.

If one is really a monarchist, one cannot concede that the monarchy becomes reduced to a simple decorative and representative institution, a kind of nice furniture or, according to the image mentioned by Loewenstein, something like the golden figure that was put on the bow of a galleon; the State, in concrete terms, would remain that of the republican parliamentary democracies, concerning the king only to countersign, as would a president of the republic, whatever the government and parliament decide. The restoration should instead involve a kind of monarchical revolution (or counter-revolution).

The well-known maxim “the king reigns but does not govern,” should be opposed to the other: “the king reigns and rules” — rules, of course, not in terms of the absolute monarchies

of the past, but, in the normal way, in the framework of established law and a constitution. In this regard, the best example was given to us by the previous central European monarchies, for which Loewenstein has not hidden his strong antipathy. Not only a regulatory, moderating, and arbitral power with respect to various political forces should be reserved to the sovereign but also that of a last resort. The constitution and the law should not be made into fetishes. Constitution and law do not fall ready-made from heaven. They are historical formations, and their intangibility is conditioned by the normal course of things. When this course fails, when faced with emergency situations, a higher power must assert itself positively, which has remained dormant and inactive under normal conditions; it does not for this reason cease to constitute the center of the system. The king is the legitimate subject of that power. He can and must exercise it whenever it is necessary, saying, "Thus far and no farther," and preventing every subversive revolutionary movement (preventing it by means of a "revolution from above"), as well as any dictatorial upheaval whose only justification is the lack of a true center of authority.

It is not said that such power must be exercised directly by the sovereign; he may do it through a capable and decisive chancellor or prime minister who, strong in the support of the Crown and essentially responsible as its face, can deal with the situation. The case of Bismarck in the "institutional conflict" mentioned by Loewenstein corresponds to this possibility. Certain of the confidence of the sovereign, Bismarck could also take no account of parliament's opposition and by following his path, he made the greatness of Germany, receiving later the approval of his work in a new constitution.

One might venture to say that, in part, there was a similar situation at first sight when the King of Italy supported Mussolini, granting him powers that however, Victor Emmanuel himself, if he had not felt so constitutionally bound, could have exercised, so as to impose an order on an Italy shocked by subversion and the social crisis through new structures, without the need of fascism, and preventing those developments — defined by some in terms of a “diarchy” — which finally undermined to some extent his position through the presence, almost, of a state within the state. At decisive moments a sovereign should never forget the saying of an ancient wisdom: *Rex est qui nihil metuit* (The king is the one who fears nothing). Through a badly understood humanitarianism, in extreme cases, even the danger of battles in which blood might flow, he cannot be afraid because this is not about persons, but of making authority, order and justice rule above all things, against possible turmoil by a part of it. The formula, as we have already stated: “Thus far and no farther.” In unexceptional situations Benjamin Constant’s conception of the Crown as the “fourth power,” as an arbitral and balancing function, can be accepted. Even the rights recognized by Bagehot for the Crown: the right to be consulted, the right to encourage, the right to warn, are unexceptionable.

Therefore, a shift of the center of gravity should be effectuated with a monarchical restoration. A national delegation may also be chosen by the “people,” according to some modality (which we will return to), but it should be responsible, in *primis et ante omnia*, over against the king, according to relations of personalized responsibility which would close the door on many forms of democratic corruption. The king should be, therefore, the supreme point of reference, and the previously mentioned

values of loyalty and honor should be felt, rather than the representatives being the instruments of the parties and the mysterious, ephemeral entity of the “people” whom they exploited, and who alone has the power to confirm or repeal according to the system of absolute democracy, i.e., of officially recognized universal suffrage.

On the other hand, for a true renewal of monarchy the ideal of an organic State needs to be present, through which the problem of the compatibility in general between monarchy with the system of absolute parliamentary democracy cannot be evaded. The superimposition of one over the other can only lead to something of a hybrid. It is to be considered that if the hoped for change in mentality will be achieved, the absurdity of the system of representation based on indiscriminate universal suffrage will gradually be recognized, i.e., on the law of pure number, having as the obvious premise not the conception of the citizen as a “person” but his degrading reduction to an interchangeably undifferentiated atom.

In this regard, it must be remembered that modern democracy in its absolute form is one thing, another is a system of representation, the latter not necessarily coinciding with the former. It is known that a system of representation also existed in traditional monarchical States, but generally as organic representations, i.e., of bodies and orders, not of ideological parties. To want to consider the parties, the best system would be bipartisan, accepting an opposition that acts constructively and dynamically within the system, not outside of it or against it. (For example, that a revolutionary or communist party, whenever it observes certain purely formal statutory norms, can be considered “legal” and must be allowed in a national assembly even though

its stated or implied program is the overthrow of the existing order, is a true absurdity.) Apart from the bipartisan solution, already adopted with advantage in England's monarchy, the representative system that through its most organic character should be harmonized with the monarchy would be traditional corporative, in the broadest sense, without reference to the attempt, which was made by fascism with the creation of a corporate rather than partocratic Chamber. Perhaps the current Portuguese system — the Spanish to a lesser extent — will approach the desired order. Loewenstein highlighted the alternative that would occur in the case of a restoration, because either the king is supported on the upper classes who are more inclined to sustain the monarchy, and then he would play into the hands of those who are quick to accuse him of conservative reactionism, or else he goes toward the working classes and, in general, starts acting as the "king of the people," and then he would dangerously alienate the support of the other part of the nation.

Now, a similar turning point obviously presupposes the retention, the perpetuation, of the state of class struggle, in terms of Marxist ideology. But we believe that one of the prerequisites for a new, organic, and monarchical order must be seen exactly in overcoming this antagonistic division of national forces. Corporate reform should aim precisely at that, which the mentioned alternative is carried out, opposite which the restored monarchy would be found, or would fail to a large degree. Even if within corporations, or whatever you want to designate as the primary representative authority, opposing tendencies were asserted, one is to think that the preeminence given to the

principle of jurisdiction would reduce the ideological factor considerably in such differences.

In a sector that has become increasingly important to the system of corporate representatives on the basis of responsibilities could exhibit an actual character of a particular path of development exhibited by almost teratology presented by the technocratic element and, in general, by the economy. We know of the criticism against the technological civilization of consumption in the most advanced industrial society; the destructive aspects that are typical have been shown, the need to put a brake on economic processes that have become almost independent, like the image of the “unleashed giant” used by W. Sombart. Now it is not possible to envisage a brake on the system, a restraint, without the intervention of a higher political power. The task of adequately restraining and ordering on the strength of a more complete hierarchy of interests and values, the forces in motion in society, obviating also a paradoxical situation that has occurred in recent times, that of an increasingly strong state with an increasingly weak head, would evidently find the most favorable environment for its implementation in a true monarchical state. Institutionally, the authority could be provided either by a single assembly, but, alongside representatives of economic and productive forces also comprising representatives of the spiritual and cultural life (as there were, in fact, in the “General States” or Diets, similar assemblies of ancient traditional monarchical regimes), or by the bicameral system, an Upper House and a Lower House, the latter being truly corporative, the former making itself felt instead in the higher-level instances. We know that the latest “conquest” of absolute democracy was to reduce the upper House, or Senate, to a useless duplicate of the

other House because even for it the principle of the election of the masses and of interim elections (at least for most of its elements) was asserted. As in the Italy of yesterday, the definition of the Upper House should be, instead, one of the essential tasks of the monarchy, even if only conveniently assisted, continuing the formal nature of the appointment from above.

In this way the Upper House would remain the political body closest to the Crown and it would be natural that loyalty, fidelity, and active impersonality were present in it to the highest degree. It should have power, authority, prestige, and a meaning different from that in the Lower House. As custodian of values and higher interests, it would constitute the real nucleus of the state, its "head." It would, therefore, have to emphasize its active functional character in the place of the codetermination of the political line, a character that will differentiate it greatly from what had been, in post-Risorgimento monarchical Italy, the Senate: an assembly of worthy people, of "highly intelligent men," of notable personages according to worth, yet as essentially decorative role, without any real, vigorous organic function.

Without dwelling on the details, it is clear that a system of this kind would overcome the aberrations of absolute democracy and the republican partocracy and it would have its natural integration in the monarchy. Here monarchy would not be something heterogeneous, almost the remains of another world, superimposed on the current parliamentary system. Therefore, *de rigueur*, the problem of monarchy returns as part of a larger problem, that of the "revolutionary" reshaping of the entire modern state.

But for the functions of the monarchy that we have tried to sketch out, in order to be able not only “to reign” but also to have an active part — more or less critical depending on the circumstances — in the “government,” it is clear that it would require a special qualification of the sovereign not only in terms of character, pursuant to the strict traditional education of princes, but also in terms of expertise, knowledge, and experience. This is made necessary by the character both of the times as well as the modern state. The ancient regal Far Eastern conception of *wei-wu-wei*, of “action without action,” is suggestive, alluding not to a direct material action but to an action “through presence,” as the center and quintessential power. This aspect, while maintaining its intrinsic validity in terms just mentioned, when, as in current times and probably still more in those that were predicted, everything is in motion and forces tend to move out of their normal orbit, needs to be integrated, while taking care that it is not crippled in this way. As we said, in other times in a monarchy the symbol also had preeminence over the person; given the overall climate and given the strength of a long tradition and legitimacy, it was able not to be jeopardized by the merely human aspects of the person who in either case embodied it. If today or tomorrow we were to come to a restoration of the monarchy, this would no longer be possible: the delegate should be at most at the stature of the principle, not through the ostentation of the person, but through the opposite. He should also have the qualities of a true leader, a man capable of holding the scepter more than just symbolically and ritually. Such a qualification to this day cannot be only like that of the ages of the warrior dynasties. The qualities of character, courage, and vitality, while remaining the essential basis, should be united with those of an enlightened mind and essential political knowledge,

adequate to the complex structure of a modern state and the forces at work in contemporary society.

The decline of traditional regimes had two causes which acted firmly even before the materialistic climate of modern civilization and industrial society was added. On the one hand, at the top there was in fact a growing inability to fully embody the principle especially when the general structures were beginning to creak; on the other hand, at the bottom, there was the failure, in the people who had become more or less the “masses,” of a specific sensibility, of certain capacity of recognition. Therefore, the possibility of a monarchical restoration is subjected to a double claim, and appears to be conditioned by the removal of both negative factors. On the one hand, rulers would be valued, who do not owe their prestige only to their super-elevated position, to the symbol that overshadows them, but who are also able to cope with any situation as exponents of an idea and a higher power. On the other hand, that change in general mental and moral level of the masses would be required, which need we have not tired of emphasizing.

Nowadays, one or the other conditions appear hypothetical. But if we do not have to come to essentially negative conclusions, to be drawn from studies on monarchy in the modern state, such as that undertaken by Loewenstein; if it must not be considered merely as an institution, a pale shadow of what monarchy was, it is now almost entirely devoid of its meaning and its essential *raison d'être*, there is no other way of laying out the problem. It is therefore worthwhile to repeat that the fate of monarchy appears to be, in a certain way, in agreement with that of the entire modern civilization and more properly depends on what may be

the solution to a crisis which, as appears from many clues, is assailing the very foundations of that civilization.